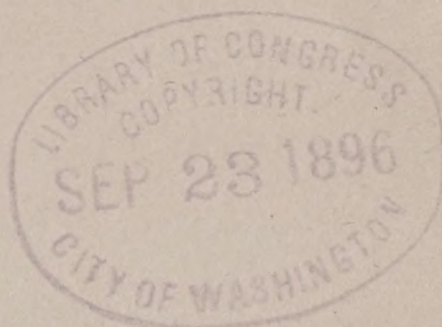


THE COTTAGE BY THE SEA,

BY

MRS. JAMES CAREY COALE.



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THE COTTAGE BY THE SEA.

IN a sea-coast hamlet in Maine, dwelt Robert Grant and his only sister Nelly. These two individuals, who are of special interest in this narrative, were the only children of their parents, who had died a couple of years previous to the date of this story.

The mother, dying after her husband, had left them to the care of each other. Her experience had made her realize that men require the care of the female sex almost as much as women do theirs.

Rob was just of age, and his sister was two years younger than he. They were pretty well equipped for life's journey by a good plain school education, and the blessing of fine constitutions and good mental capacities, and they had also had a very fair moral training. Rob was a tall robust youth, fresh and fair in complexion, with a frank expression, which was not belied by his character and qualities.

But we must now call attention to this, their native village, which was right on the sea, for it was here that they both first saw the light. The situation on the two sides of this little place was pleasantly diversified by green hills, through which flowed a stream of considerable size, and from whose tops could be seen a smiling valley, and, in the distance, the noble range of the White Mountains; and above, and over all, towered that monarch of hills, Mount Washington. This grand mountain is one of Nature's kings. Our great first President of the same family name, as we know, refused to be made king over this beautiful country, which he loved so well as to be willing to lay down his life for its sake. No man can do more than that. We have heroes still existing, thank Heaven, even in this prosaic age of the world. Our firemen are among those of the new dispensation; for their roles are to save precious life, and not like heroes of the olden times, to destroy it. To save one's country, it is permitted by a great Creator that human life may be sacrificed, and in the destruction which follows, seed may be sown for a fruitful and glorious harvest to mankind. But let us hope and pray, and try to hasten the day when the Scripture prophecy

shall come to pass, promising peace and prosperity, and when all creation shall rejoice in His favor.

But to return to the village of Seaport—for so was it called—with its numerous fisher folk and other toilers; for, with the exception of a few gospel ministers, and a couple of doctors, and a lawyer, the village was devoid of all other professional people. A town in the near vicinity was a source of supply of all the demands for means of pleasure and cultivation. This place—during colonial times—had had some small importance in being a depot for the fitting out of whaling vessels. The trade of the town had dwindled very much, gradually, as kerosene was more and more used for lighting and other purposes, and other sources of oil being discovered than that of the aquatic monsters. So the poor beasts were allowed to rest, for a time, at least. There has always been a mysterious romance about the monarch of the deep, particularly as we are told, on good authority, that one of them, selected by the Creator of the universe, swallowed Jonah. Is it not reasonable to suppose that poor Jonah must have been in an almost insensible condition whilst he was an inmate of this wonderful animal? Are we not sometimes ourselves in this state, because

of disobedience to our enlightened convictions, that we become bound up, and feel as only half alive, and as though we might also be in the carcass of a fish?

Robert's grandfather had made his son familiar with his stories of the wonders of the sea, and he had enjoyed so much recounting them to Rob—although not a seaman himself—that he awakened desire in the boy; and as he could not be a whaler, he yet could be a fisherman, and though his avocation would not be so exciting as in the first case, yet would in the present time be much more profitable. His daily business—weather permitting—took him out to an extended sail on the ocean, to such a distance only, however, that he would be able to return in a couple of days, not liking to leave Nelly for a longer time. He used to say to himself, “if it were not for Nell I should go much farther; but then, perhaps I might in the end fare worse, and besides what should I do without her?”

Their little cottage was on a high cliff, fanned by land, as well as by sea breezes. It had a small porch on either side, and was approached by a road from the village, which passed over the hills to the town beyond, called Buxton. Nell had a

fancy for vines, so the verandas were draped with some of the more hardy kinds, which she could coax to grow on this healthy but bleak spot. However, plants thrive well in good air, and after they had passed their infancy they generally did well. In midsummer those lovely fragile blossoms, the morning-glories, covered the long trellis, which Nelly's friend, Stephen Green, had made for her. It screened the kitchen garden from the front of the cottage, and attracted the attention of every one passing, by the beauty and the shades of the graceful flowers.

Although almost too robust looking for actual beauty, Nell had bright eyes, a pretty mouth, and a sweet smile which disclosed perfect teeth. Her skin, though embrowned by the sun and air, showed such perfect condition of health ; and her vigor and lightness on her feet, which comes from strength and good spirits, made her cheering and animating to all who saw her.

CHAPTER II.

AS Nelly came down from the porch, her brother entered a gate leading from the sands, with a string of unusually fine mackerel, trout and other fish, so fresh and alive that it seemed a pity, almost, to remove their beautiful scales. She called out to him: "How glad I am, and how lucky it is, that you caught such good kinds this time, as Miss Agnes is coming to-day to dine here. She says she always gets the freshest and better fish here than elsewhere."

"I am truly pleased, Nelly, when I can serve Miss Agnes in any way, but you know all about that. She is what I call a lady, and a perfect woman too. Why, Nell, I would be glad to risk my life for Miss Agnes."

Agnes and Rob were nursed together by Rob's mother. Mrs. Sommerville, mother to Agnes, was born in England, and had lived there until she was married. She brought over to primitive Maine her ideas of raising infants. We are now going back some years in our story, when Rob and Agnes and Nelly were all children. Mrs. Sommerville, being

a delicate woman, decided that Mary Grant would prove a healthier nurse to her fragile little daughter than she herself would. Although it was a great trial to her, she resigned the vocation of feeding her child to another, and was doubtless wise in so doing. As little Agnes lived altogether in the cottage, and was in the open air nearly all the time when the weather was suitable, a marked improvement in the child was observed, which rewarded her mother for her great self-denial. Asleep or awake, Mary Grant was devoted to her charge. She was faithful by nature, and was a good wife and attentive mother, and of a bright, cheerful disposition. Little Rob was let run as soon as he was able to stand on his sturdy legs, and Sukey, the cow, served as his source—from that time—for nutriment. This cow was rescued from a herd of Jerseys that had been wrecked from a vessel, by Rob's father. Nelly loved the bonny beast, and did her justice in milking her when only a dozen years old, for her hands were strong and supple, and she could milk as well as could Dolly, the maid. Sukey was not the only cow owned by the family, for there were others of less repute, and many prints of sweet, golden butter were made from the cream and

sought for by the neighborhood, Mrs. Sommerville taking the greater part.

After several years more, Nelly aspired to have a hen-house of her own, which she made a model of cleanliness. She would not let little Miss Agnes go into a place that was not sweet and clean, and the little girl, who was a year older than Nelly, loved to see the white ducks, speckled fowls and lazy turkeys, especially when Nelly fed them. The latter were the plague of the poor girl's life. The hen birds are inefficient mothers; they prefer to roost in high trees, and let the young ones look out for themselves. Comparatively few turkeys would be raised if the trusty common hens were not available. When they outgrew them, it was Nelly's charge to look after the half-grown turkeys. She used to say that the turkey mothers were like some ladies she had heard of, who were very fine, but wished to be above all others, and even their own children. But they had to come down at last, and be fed to repletion, to make them ready for market, and then they were as often eaten by the common sort as any other.

Nelly was feeding her fowls, who were cackling and fighting, but notwithstanding the noise, she

heard wheels on the gravel, and turned and saw Miss Agnes alighting from her phaeton, and the ponies standing quietly by. Agnes seldom forgot to pluck a handful of grass for Fancy and Fun, and they were evidently expecting it now. She remembered them, and then told the boy in the rumble to feed them well at home, and so dismissed him, with the assurance that Miss Nelly would bring her home in time, so that he need not wait.

The two girls kissed each other, and now began the day of all the week to each of them. It was the one in which they were the happiest. It seemed as if they could not do enough for each other. The benefit of this friendship was mutual, for the refinement of ideas which one imparted was received by the other, and it did not have the effect of lifting her out of the sphere in which she had been placed, and in which she was contented, because she was good and happy. Nelly gave such true affection to her friends that it was a benefit to them on both sides. A true loving nature does bestow happiness to those, who have that in them, that is able to receive and appreciate kindness. The minds of some unfortunate people being so filled with either envy or jealousy, or both, there is no room for a better feeling.

CHAPTER III.

WHILE Agnes and Nelly were picking berries in the little garden, a young man sauntered by, and his practiced eye being struck by the contrast between the two girls, he stopped and addressing Nell, said : “ Can you tell me, my pretty girl, where the inn, or tavern as you call it down here, may be situated ? ”

“ Yes,” said Nell, “ I can tell you where what you call the inn up there is, but I am to be spoken to with respect, and not told I am pretty.”

A smile dimpled the smooth cheek of Miss Agnes at Nell’s retort, and the stranger asked pardon of the spunky maid.

She went out of the garden, and approaching the stranger, said : “ Do you see down there under those willows ? ”

“ Certainly, I do,” replied he.

“ There is the house of entertainment for man and beast, sir, and is right on the stream, for the convenience of those lazy swells, who come down from Boston to fish about here in these rivers. Why, some of them fish right out of the very

windows and off the porches. Those shallows contain only small fry, but good enough for such as they. 'Little fish must keep near shore, but larger ones may venture more,' " said Nell with a toss of her head.

After the stranger had left, Rob, who had met him, came in and said: "Nell, who is that chap?"

"I cannot say, except that there is his card which reads, 'Guy Huntington, Artist, Toronto.' "

"I thought he was one of those John Bulls," said her brother, who had no especial love for the people of our mother country. "Nell, have nothing to say to artists. They are generally worthless, I believe."

"Oh, how churlish you are, Rob; but I am sure that Miss Agnes can tell what a man is."

Just then Agnes, who was rocking on the flowery porch, called out: "Do not be too sure, Nelly. It takes a much wiser head than mine to read a man."

"Oh, Miss Agnes! he could scarcely keep his eyes off you. I said to myself, 'He has an eye in his head. He has never seen anyone to compare to her.' "

“Why, Nelly, you are a goose, if you will excuse me for saying so, for an artist sees real beauty constantly. He was only studying me artistically.”

“That may be, for if he caught the likeness, he would sell his picture better than any he had ever done in his life before. I would lay a wager on that.”

A dog, now running up and barking joyously, was the precursor of his master, who had gone off a few moments before, and now returned to ask Miss Agnes if she would allow him to row her to her home, and remarked: “There is a full moon to-night, which will make it more pleasant. You know, Nelly, Stephen Green has been playing his flute now a good deal, and would join us if you ask him.” Turning to Miss Agnes, he remarked: “Whilst Stephen plays, Nell will take an oar, if she wishes; but I can row four people as well as two any day.”

They soon embarked, and started for the willows. The artist hailed them and asked for a seat.

“I am sorry to say we are full,” replied Rob, “so cannot oblige you.”

When Agnes was landed, Nell and Stephen waited—not at all against their will—at the pier

until Rob delivered Agnes safely at her home. When he was again seated in the boat, and before they had gone any distance, their voices and the flute rang out on the moonlit air in a pretty boating song. The artist heard the music, and when they reached the willows, he was there ready to go on board. When he was seated, he at once, in a beautiful tenor voice, sang a familiar air in which Nell and Rob joined ; but the flutist held his breath to hear, as he thought, the stranger's wonderful tones.

Although Nelly had naturally a good sweet voice, it was entirely untrained ; but as she and her brother were in the habit of singing together, their voices accorded, and with that of the artist made a melody which awoke the echoes along the hills. Stephen Green began to feel the difference between an experienced man of the world and society and a young fisherman, though not an ordinary fellow. His having been Rob's friend, he had, by association with him and his sister, imbibed considerable refinement of ideas and habits. Nelly had taken pains with him to encourage him in his improvement, and consequently he had become much attached to her.

Mr. Huntington had now ceased singing, and began to entertain them by interesting talk of his experiences in many ways. As Nelly always wished to acquire knowledge, she listened very attentively and lost none of his conversation, and by her intelligent questions and remarks arrested the interest of the artist. This girl was not formed in an ordinary mould. Her father's mother and other relatives had seen better days, and were people of some refinement and good education; but reverses had come and her grandmother had married a worthy, but plain man. Nell resembled her in many respects, and as she was rather remarkable both in her appearance and a certain attraction, Nell had inherited that from her, which amounted to magnetism in the granddaughter.

Rob, though glad to hear pleasant things, was more suspicious than his sister was, of strangers. But he had faith in Nelly's prudence and in her spirit. She was undergoing not only a revelation of another's mind, but a revolution of her own whole being. She never had had the privilege of talking to a man of such manners and education until now. Although the father of her friend Miss Agnes, Mr. Sommerville, had always noticed her, yet he treated

her as a mere child, as he did his own little daughter. The artist had not only mingled with people of cultivation at home and abroad, but had also gone for artistic purposes among all classes. Therefore, he could suit himself to those whom he considered beneath him as well as to his equals, and to those of even higher rank than himself. Nell had points that attracted his curiosity. Her features were clearly cut, though not at all sharp, intimating better race or blood than her present condition would justify. It was a suggestion to the artist of some romance in the lives of her forefathers, and a question, "where did these fine features originate?" Perhaps in a wilder and more talented race of people, now amalgamated with inferior ones. He admired her abundant waving hair, her form, graceful from its freedom, and her quick vivacity. But he knew from the flash of her eyes that he dared not trespass. Before the row was over he had made up his mind to aim for higher game, and to let good, honest Nelly alone. It was well for him that he had done so, for Rob was now on the watch, and heavy would the penalty have been, to be paid, for even trying to injure his sister. Young Green went home disconsolate; but it must be admitted that

Nelly felt elated by the attention which her attractions generally, and her intelligence particularly, had elicited from this knight of the pencil.

CHAPTER IV.

THE following day, the skies being slightly overcast, Rob supposed it would be the right time for him to take a holiday—which this energetic and industrious worker scarcely ever allowed himself to do—and redeem his promise to his sister that he would take Miss Agnes and her for a day's boating and fishing. Nelly proposed, on account of her friend, that her brother should invite the artist to join the expedition. Little did she know what the acceptance of this invitation involved to all, but especially to herself. So they rowed under the willows again, and found the artist busily sketching female figures; one resembling Miss Agnes, and several evidently drawn for Nelly. They all entered the trig boat, and Guy Huntington, who was in the brightest spirits, was laughing and talking in the most jolly way. Putting up a small sail, they

were soon at the pier ; and Young Grant springing up the bank quickly, was absent only a short time, and reappearing, said that Miss Agnes accepted the invitation most gladly, and would join them immediately. In a half hour, during which time even Rob was absorbed by the conversation between Nell and Mr. Huntington, Agnes appeared in a pretty boating rig, with fishing tackle of the most approved sort, and accompanied by her father. Mr. Sommersville congratulated them on their pleasant expectations for the day, and offered to send his boatman in case the wind should lull so much that it would be necessary to row. Rob said : “ Oh, no danger of that to-day, Mr. Sommerville, but we may have to use the oars on account of too much wind for sails in so small a boat.” Rob Grant had had experience as a fisherman, and of course knew the signs of the weather well. “ However,” said he, “ two men and Nell can manage this boat, even should there be a squall, so we will decline your kind offer, though I am sure, sir, with many thanks.” Grant’s surmise was sooner realized than they anticipated ; for before long it began to blow rather fresh for a sail, as was said, in so small a craft. Rob and Nell each took an oar, and though she

was not really so strong, yet she could second him remarkably well, as she was practiced and skilful.

Nelly Grant loved Agnes, and she tried not to listen to what Guy was saying with so much animation to her; but her frequent ripples of laughter evinced her enjoyment of his talk, for, indeed, few could surpass him in conversational powers, when aroused as they were now, by the appreciation of his wit, and the response from the pretty Agnes, who was looking unusually well. She had a becoming hat, which just gave her what she needed in height and finish to her rather petite features.

Nelly, who had turned round in the boat, called out: "Oh, look! look behind!" A cloud was coming rapidly, and soon as rapidly spread, and the wind, which had freshened very much, was fast changing to a gale. The smallest sail was raised on the boat, for it was now altogether too rough to row. Under this they sped before the wind, and all seemed rather to enjoy it, except Guy Huntington. He began to feel sick, and turned deathly pale. His delicate constitution had always made him fear high or rough winds. Rob, who was not accustomed to men of this sort, could not help indicating surprise, as he thought the artist was decidedly showing

the white feather. At this time the wind changed so suddenly, that the boat was careened, and before it could be recovered, was capsized. Nelly, who was an expert swimmer, and almost as strong as her brother, in the water, struck out, and Rob, seizing Agnes, whose light weight did not impede him much, although encumbered with his clothes, began to make off towards the land. The artist, after clinging to the boat, lost his hold and his head at the same time, threw his arms around Nell, who was now, in the gale and the rough waves, struggling almost for life. "Let go," shouted her brother to Huntington, "or I will kill you. If not now, hereafter."

The artist, beside himself with terror, only held the girl more tightly. Nell, knowing that they would both be drowned if he did not let go, with a superhuman effort shook herself free, and catching a plank that was passing, swam with it to Guy, who was almost faint. She made him hold to the plank, and went on as fast as she could, and kept him from falling off by calling to him, and rousing him, until she reached the nearest boat, which was coming to their assistance. With the help of the boatman they succeeded in getting the artist in,

who was now completely exhausted, Rob following, bearing Agnes on one arm, and swimming with the other. He was obliged to go slowly, but at last reached the cliff. As he stepped ashore and put her under the care of a woman standing near, she cast on him a look of gratitude which Rob could never forget. "Oh, Miss Agnes! Miss Agnes! What will your father say to all of us?"

"What can he say to you," replied she, "except testify his lifelong gratitude, for saving the life of his daughter?"

Nelly was much concerned about the artist. He had somewhat revived, but was looking terribly upset; but Agnes was as yet even dearer to her than he was. Rob, seeing how woe-begone he looked, rubbed him down; and this kindness did both of them good, as the exertion brought his circulation in play also. One of our finest poets says: "Mercy is twice blessed, both to the giver and to the receiver."

Hailing a passing seaman, he borrowed his flask of spirits, as his had been washed away, and induced Miss Sommerville to swallow a little of its contents. He also not only insisted upon Nell following the example of Agnes but gave the artist some also,

and then wound up by taking a small quantity himself. So, warmed and somewhat cheered by the draught of spirits, Rob ran to the village, all wet as he was, and obtained a horse on which he rode without saddle—so great was his haste—to the house of Mr. Sommerville, and soon returned with the good news that, although her father was from home, a vehicle with fresh clothes and wraps would be on hand as soon as possible. When the carriage arrived, in a short time, Agnes insisted upon Nelly's sharing some of the garments, although the most of them were not large enough for her well developed frame. They had repaired to a cottage, when Rob had left them, and had been steaming by the fire, so now they were ready for the changes which were rapidly made; and Agnes despatched, with the faithful Rob on her carriage box, to see her actually delivered in safety to her home.

After her friend was in the way of being made more comfortable, Nelly began to turn her thoughts to the man whose life she had saved. She ran along the sands, and there saw the print of slender bare feet. "How sorry I am for him," she thought. "He is so delicately formed that he cannot help being more nervous than a working man would be."

She followed swiftly, and saw him from a distance enter the door of the inn. She knew that she could do nothing more for him, so began to think at last of herself. She knew also that Agnes would attend to Rob's getting dry garments from some of the men at her house, and see that he was properly cared for ; so now, she was at liberty to wend her way home, and being much beloved by her little maiden who helped her with her every-day tasks and employments, hot blankets and tea, and all things necessary, were furnished for her comfort as soon as possible. She had scarcely time to take a slight nap, when there was a whistle which woke her from her sleep of exhaustion. But as Rob came in, he cried out : " Keep your bed, dear Nelly, and do not think of rising ;" and approaching her bedside, gave her a kiss, saying : " If anyone deserved rest, you do, my brave, good girl."

This voluntary caress pleased his affectionate sister more than anything Rob could have given her. She often asked him to kiss her by way of cultivating his affectional nature. He had been in the habit of saluting his mother, of whom he was very fond, and who idolized him. " Oh, dear Rob," she said, " how have you stood all this

excitement and exertion? You look so wonderfully well; but you must be very tired, and why not lie down and take a sleep?"

Rob, with a merry laugh, said: "Why, sister dear, did you ever know me guilty of such a thing as being in bed in the daytime? I could not sleep; I should feel out of my element, as a fish out of the water does."

How happy they were together, these two young people, and partly on account of their mutual respect for the kind and unselfish qualities, which each possessed. Such affection is all enduring, and is founded on what cannot be shaken. Good temper, forbearance and industry, are what make happiness and real homes.

"O, brother!" said Nelly, "if you are not worn out, will you do me a favor?"

"Ask it, sister, and it is done."

"Will you go to the inn and see after poor Mr. Huntington?"

"Pshaw, Nell, what does it matter what becomes of such a cowardly man?"

"Oh, no! Not cowardly, but only the natural feeling of a man very delicately organized. Do,

dear Rob, for my sake, go and see him, and come and tell me how he fares."

"Now, Nell, because you saved his life, there is no need of your giving him anything. He ought to bestow upon you an independent fortune, if your father's daughter, or your brother's sister, would accept such gifts, which I think will not be, in this case at any rate."

So Rob rather unwillingly, though not sullenly, took his way to the inn and found the artist in his bed, with a flushed face, and a doctor from Buxton standing beside him. Guy had requested that a physician should be brought from the nearest large town.

"So, Rob," said the doctor, moving to the other side of the room and speaking in a low tone, "this young man has a very high fever, and I must have a nurse for him for the night. From where can I get one? I cannot have one sent from the Buxton hospital before to-morrow; but he will need much attention at once, and during the night. I remain in the inn until to-morrow myself," said the pompous, though small man, "but I must have a nurse. What shall I do? What do you advise, Grant?"

“I will come myself, doctor, and bring one of our maids, who is somewhat a hand in nursing.”

“Good for you,” said Dr. Bell, for he feared much that he would have to sit up all night himself.

Rob had a kind heart under his jacket, and he had his reward in the future for this very act.

“Well, doctor, I hope it is not a serious matter,” said Rob.

“Well, well, we will see,” replied the cautious doctor.

“I shall,” said Rob to himself, “give him all the ice and ice water that he wants, no matter what the doctor says about that. One’s common sense dictates that at any rate, and I believe in common sense.” So the kind Rob carried out his good intentions with zeal; and it was principally owing to his judgment and his watchfulness, that the fever was much quelled by morning.

The doctor seemed much surprised, and apparently disappointed, when he felt his patient’s pulse. The little man had hoped to turn a good many honest pennies, in this case of illness, and although he wished his patient to get well eventually, he did not wish too rapid an end to the case. So Mr. Huntington was in for a tedious spell; but

from Rob's intelligent care, aided by a trained young woman as nurse, from a hospital in one of the neighboring towns, he stood a much better chance of recovering less slowly, than if he had been left to the old time ideas of the doctor.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER a couple of weeks had elapsed, the artist, leaning on Rob's stout arm, the nurse, bringing easy chair and cushions to the veranda, soon had him comfortably seated. He was delighted to get out once more into the warm sunshine and pleasant air, scented with the sweet perfume of roses and honeysuckles which grew profusely around the porch of the inn. The following day Rob took Nelly to sit with him, and she was pleased to be of service to him and he more than pleased to have her read to him, and in a few days to bring him delicacies made by herself, in the most approved fashion.

During these days of convalescence, in entertaining each other, Nelly would sing to him her simple

songs and he narrated stories, original and otherwise, quoted poetry and then, when he grew strong enough, read to her parts that he thought would suit her taste, of Shakespeare's plays. All this was to the girl the seventh heaven of enjoyment; and when, after he had begun to grow much better, though his voice was not yet very strong but sweet and sympathetic, he sang to her, and her soul melted within her. Can any one wonder, that she lost her heart completely? He sent to one of the larger towns for a guitar and a violin, and accompanied himself with one in singing, and played the other, in Nelly's opinion, most divinely, which gave the poor girl great delight.

Guy, seeing her twice every day, grew so accustomed to her pleasant company that when, as he grew stronger, she ceased coming constantly, he asked her why she absented herself.

"I have been lazy lately," she replied, "and I must not leave all my work for our good Martha to do any longer."

Nell's image had effaced entirely that of Miss Agnes in the mind of the artist.

"No, Nellie, you must never soil your hands again with work. See how white and soft they are,

now that you have ceased toiling. Nelly, look at me. Do you comprehend me—that I want you for myself; that I cannot do without you two hours together? How can I win you, dearest of women, to go with me to Paris as my beloved, respected wife?”

Nell's pretty eyes opened wide, and then a flood of tears dimmed them, so that Guy arose and sat beside her, holding her hand and pillowing her curly head upon his shoulder.

“Oh, Guy! how have I deserved this of God's mercy and of you? Are you certain that you love poor Nelly, and that you will not tire of her? I am not worthy to become your wife. I need education, cultivation, accomplishments and other things to be worthy of that high position.”

“You have both mental capacity and ability, my dear girl, and that will be all right. I do love you—so devotedly that I cannot spare you to anyone else. How can I help loving so sweet, so lovely and so loving a person? I will be true to you until death, if you will take me.”

Her brother, coming soon after to relieve her, saw that she had undergone much emotion from some cause, and he, suspecting what it was, sent

her home, and then Guy asked young Grant for his sister in marriage.

“What Nelly says, I suppose, I must say, and if she accepts you, you are aware that you will deprive me, Mr. Huntington, of my greatest treasure. There are few men whom I know, who are worthy of her, and God grant that you may prove to be so.”

“Oh, Rob,” said the artist, “you must sell out here in a year or so, and come over also to the old country. You can rise there.”

“Oh, no, sir. This is the country to rise in, and I have but little of such ambition. What I wish, is to be able to serve the Lord by helping His creatures, and as I now work for a living for myself, I trust the time will come when I can work for others also. May He bless you, as you treat my dear sister.”

The artist seemed to take this from Rob good-naturedly, though he really thought him a great bore, and was rather glad he declined to come to the old country. Huntington was abundantly able in his means to marry, and, as he intended going abroad, in order to both study and practise his art, he had already concluded some months previously, to take up his abode in some of the European

capitals. He would have preferred to take Nelly on other terms than in marriage, and would have liked to induce her to elope with him ; but he soon found that that was impossible. This conviction gave Guy confidence in her character, and increased his respect, and was a great inducement to him to make her his wife.

Men of irregular lives, and who do not possess steadfast principles themselves, are generally suspicious of women ; and here was, as he thought, a test of her stability and virtue. I am sorry to have to say that, generally, American men are exceptions to those of other large nations in the respect which is shown by them to the female sex. Loose ideas prevail in the European capitals, especially among the highest and lowest classes, except in Ireland, where the chastity of the Roman Catholic peasants speaks well for the care with which the young are taught the true meaning of virtue, and where honor on the Church is reflected, whose priests instruct the ignorant on that particular part of their duty.

We trust that better times are coming, and at present there are so many noble men and women who, by speech and writing and personal effort, are helping to hasten those days when the poor hands,

which are now raised in supplication, will be held up to praise and to thank Heaven that, through the minds and hearts of these valiant people, they have been prompted to come out and march under the banner of true equal rights, thereby protecting young females from demons in the shape of men and women.

CHAPTER VI.

ONE bright day in October, when all Nature seemed propitious, a wedding procession was ushered into the little church which stood on the outskirts of the village; and Nelly, looking fresh and sweet in simple but becoming attire, and which was pronounced by Miss Agnes to be in perfect taste, walked up the aisle beside her brother, followed by the girl (who had nursed Guy), and Stephen Green, and was met at the altar by Guy Huntington. Miss Agnes graced the occasion with her presence, as did her father, though looking sad at the idea of parting with her lifelong friend. As soon as possible, poor young Green escaped into the background,

as the girl he had walked up with had Rob to stand with her.

Nelly had received an elegant dressing case with expensive furnishings, and as it had no card or name with it, she strongly suspected that Stephen had appropriated his saved earnings for that purpose. Poor boy, he had expected to take his bride on a nice journey, when the happy day should arrive to begin his wedding tour.

After the ceremony was over, our Nelly, now Mrs. Huntington, turned around as soon as possible and beckoned to Stephen, who was looking very disconsolate; thus showing her consideration for others, even in this supreme moment of her life. She held out her hand and said cheerfully: "Do not forget your promise to come over to France when my brother comes, Mr. Green."

That kind invitation just saved the poor fellow from sheer despair. She had told him there were other things beside love for men, and for women too, and he must improve himself in every way possible, and then come over and see the world.

Both Mr. Sommerville and Agnes had made Nelly beautiful and substantial gifts to perfect her outfit and trousseau. There is nearly always, in

this imperfect life, something to mar perfect bliss. Nelly, although being very happy—having a warm heart—felt the separation from her brother and from her dear Agnes. Guy was in very good health and spirits now, and exerted himself to win her away from these sad thoughts. It would not have been in her nature to forget others on account of her being happy herself. But seeing her husband so amiable, she devoted herself to him, making every preparation possible for his comfort during the ocean trip.

The sea breezes soon brought color to the faces which had been so pale, one from unusual emotion and the other from illness. In sitting and musing on these later and strange occurrences, the bride would love to fancy her husband as a knight at the head of a troop of horse, charging the enemy and leading them on to victory. Sometimes she would imagine him rushing before an unruly horse to save life. Either destroying or saving life, she scarcely cared which, so that he only showed courage. She was not aware of his moral cowardice, which would mar her peace for years of her young life.

When, after a short and safe voyage, they at last arrived in Paris, and were fortunate enough in find-

ing a house which suited them, although in rather a dingy street, which, however, had width and some other things to relieve its monotony. Guy, having been in Europe several times and spent months in Paris, had acquaintances there, and, having requested a list of the best modistes from the wife of an artist friend, accompanied Nelly himself to choose her gowns and all that she required. When dressed in some of these attires, she bloomed out quite a beauty. Her affable but modest manner elicited the admiration of the people who are considered to have the finest taste in women and dress. She soon became more accustomed to society, and any want of ease that she betrayed was ascribed only to a want of knowledge of the language, rather than to the facts of the case.

Her husband had shown a great deal of patience and good judgment in the selection of her habiliments. His artistic eye had seized at once upon the colors which would suit her complexion and style, and she had assisted in selecting the materials. Though she was enjoying all this gayety, she knew that she had work before her, and must not allow herself to be drawn into mere amusement, when her intellect was really so far from being up to the

standard in knowledge and development. So she began to study industriously, under good masters, the French language, general history, literature, music, and even philosophy. She evinced a peculiar taste for the last study. Among her favorite volumes were Plutarch's Lives, as great examples both of worthy and unworthy men who had lived in the past but who had close representatives in the present.

Her talent for music was undoubted, and, as her ambition and enthusiasm were so roused, she made rapid progress, and in a surprisingly short time her husband and she were in great demand at soirees and entertainments, in order to contribute their share. Their "at homes" were pronounced delightful, as they were very obliging, and sang both solos and duos, to the gratification of their friends. Their apartments, as has been said, were in rather an old, gloomy street; but, being near the river, a beautiful white marble bridge lighted up the landscape. The gleaming river, with its associations, for by this time she had learned many interesting facts of French history, and of Paris and the Seine, and her fancy would people those boats on the water with knights and ladies of olden times, when truer chivalry reigned in France than at the present time.

Guy was still attentive, and spent his evenings at home, or else accompanied her to entertainments, of both public and private character. Of course, he devoted himself to others when in society, but always saw that she was well attended to. Nelly was very happy at this period, and her health and spirits improved each week of her life. Some of the wives of the English and American artists professed to hold their heads above Nelly, having heard that Mr. Huntington had married a woman who was not in the same rank of life with himself. Most foreigners, who regard all who are not noble on the same level, shrugged their shoulders and laughingly would say, when these ladies made those adverse remarks: "Ah, but Madam Huntington is so charming, and Monsieur so talented. Their house is the resort of all the most agreeable people. One meets there no one who is uncultivated—no vulgarians; and not so many commonplace people as usual. Unlike your American talk, money is not spoken of, but only delightful things which it procures. And the tone of the house is so simple and so cordial. Oh, they are refreshing in their fondness for each other. She really possesses the truest refinement, proceeding from her good, kind

heart and sincere sympathy for others. She is simply charming in every respect."

CHAPTER VII.

SO Nelly at last became the fashion, and Guy was really proud of his wife. He had painted her in various poses, and she being one of the finest models in Paris, and sitting only to him, gave him an advantage over the other artists, who were very desirous to have her sit for them, in various characters and situations. A sculptor requested it, as a great favor, that he might take the model of her form, and make from it a statue to be placed on the sarcophagus of a queen, which was a very important order which he had but recently received. Guy left it entirely to herself, whether or not to grant his request.

She asked of her husband, "Would it be of any advantage to you, dear?" He replied that he thought not, but that it would be only an honor to himself, through her. He would be considered

merely the husband of a woman whose figure was thought the most perfect, as a copy, of any in the city.

“I care not for you to have that kind of honor ; so, if you will permit me, I will decline the proposal.”

“But, Nelly, you would have one thousand pounds presented to you, and that would be a nice little gift for you to bestow upon your brother Robert.”

“That is a temptation,” said this good wife ; “but I think that you will prefer that I should not accept the so-called honor, so I will still decline. Will you, dear Guy, write to Mr. Stone, and, with a due acknowledgment of the compliment, tell him that I must refuse, with much regret.”

Guy folded his arms around her, and said : “What would you not do, or leave undone, for me, my dear wife ? I am not worthy of such unselfish devotion. Your ideals are so high, that it is difficult for any man to live up to them.”

For several months after this Huntington toiled most industriously and continuously, producing the best work he had ever done. His opportunities

and perseverance had improved the style of his efforts in this difficult and exacting art. His paintings were always finer when he was much in the society of his wife. They were purer in conception, and there were depicted in them more feeling and more expression of his interior life. He began to almost command the market, so much were his paintings sought after.

Mr. and Miss Sommerville came to Paris at this period, and Miss Agnes, being in his wife's company frequently, attracted the artist's attention as a subject to paint. He thought, if he could catch her fleeting and changing expressions, that her face, depicted on canvas as he knew that he could portray it, would prove a great success, and bring him still greater fame. The photographs of Agnes were unsatisfactory; yet the artist supposed that, though her features were not very regular, yet her bright and amiable spirit, speaking through those violet eyes, with the varying bloom of her complexion, framed by the light rippling hair, worn so simply and effectively, would constitute all he desired to make a striking likeness of a truly lovely American woman.

Agnes consented to his request, and Nelly reminded her of her observation, some years before, about his catching her likeness, and its being such a fortunate hit for him. She said: "Do you not remember that I said I would lay a wager that, if he could succeed in doing so, that it would sell more readily than any of his former pictures which had hitherto been painted. Little did we know then what Guy and I would be to each other in the future, when we were two merry, thoughtless girls, enjoying the simple things of country life and amusements which pleased early youth? Why, don't you remember, Agnes, how happy even the sunshine and the singing of the birds, and the beauty and fragrance of our morning-glories and honeysuckles would inspire us to glee and joyful laughter? Your mother used to say to me, 'Nelly, make my little girl run with you, but not uphill or too fast; and make her laugh, my dear. It is a good thing for growing ones to have a merry laugh now and then.' And she would say, too, 'My dear children, do not neglect to sing each day. It is good for the lungs, and good for the voice to exercise it; and our Heavenly Father has not given us voices to neglect. We should try to have some

cultivation and improvement for them.' And don't you remember, Agnes, what fits of laughter we would get into, sometimes? I think all healthy girls are subject to those fits."

Nelly's heart was beginning to be burdened by forebodings, induced by symptoms in her husband, of a wish to go out into the world, and to those places to which she could not accompany him. So this simple, pathetic talk to her friend was a relief to her. She seemed to love Agnes better, and appreciate her even more, as her mind was strengthened and enlarged by the knowledge and experience she had lately acquired. It requires good sense and consideration to love friends intelligently.

Agnes looked at her friend, and thought, "Was there ever a more beautiful creature? Her very soul seems to speak through her dark eyes, which have a softer expression than formerly. And as she cast them down, her long lashes rested on her cheek which was of a much paler hue than it was when she was happy, simple Nelly Grant."

But to return to the portrait of Agnes, who made but one condition with Huntington in regard to it, and that was that he should paint a duplicate for her father at whatever price the artist chose to place

upon it. The picture proved to be a great success, not only because the likeness was true, but that it was even of a more spiritual type than the original. It was a three-quarter portrait in size, and the beautiful hands were held in rather a deprecating attitude, as though she were appealing to some one to turn and take the upward track, which would lead to love and happiness.

Being of such a sensitive organization, Agnes premised that Guy was in a crisis of his life, and during the sittings she had attempted to instill into his mind some of the ideas and doctrines which she had adopted, and considered of such inestimable value to herself. She had met with some books, some little time before, which had been a new revelation to her, and when she found, upon broaching the subject, that he was really better informed than she was in the merely literal part of the belief, she expressed not only surprise, but satisfaction. But the last did not continue very long, when he said to her that his father had been devoted to those ideas, and they had become part of his every-day life, and had made it so complete and practically useful that the influence of his father's example had impressed him quite deeply in his early youth. But

he supposed that as he was not formed, either mentally or physically, of stuff which had as firm a fibre as his father's had, that he had allowed the temptations of the world, the flesh, and the devil to nearly obliterate all the good which he had thus imbibed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE portrait attracted a great deal of attention, and, consequently, orders began to pour in upon Guy, as every woman that saw the likeness, that could afford it, wished to have one painted by a man who had such exquisite taste in colors, and the arrangement of the details, to say nothing of the beauty of the face itself. Most of them, not having seen the original of the picture, concluded that he flattered her very much, and would do the same inartistic, but, as they supposed, kind, favor to them.

The favorable reports of the likeness reached the ears of a duchess who was one of the first leaders of society in Paris. She visited the studio, saw the canvas from which looked out the sweet face of

Agnes, and was so delighted with it that she requested Mr. Huntington to solicit the consent of the girl to paint her a duplicate of the picture, which should be put in the place of honor in her gallery of very valuable paintings.

“Do you think, Mr. Huntington,” said the duchess—who, though fifty years of age, was still handsome—with one of her sweetest smiles, for her lips could still display a fine set of teeth, “do you think, with the aid of a portrait of me, painted in my youth by one of the first masters of that age, that you could succeed in making me a likeness that will not be entirely eclipsed in looks by this lovely one, if it were hung in the same gallery?”

The artist, who was always awake to perceive when fortune offered him a chance, and alert in taking advantage of it, said: “Your Grace, it would not be at all requisite for me to study a picture of you in early youth, for I am sure I could succeed in giving you one of the handsomest portraits of any woman living, without flattering you, as I should only depict you at your best.”

Guy was fast learning to be an accomplished courtier, and although this compliment was not as delicate and refined as he usually paid, yet he

thought it suited the taste, probably, better than one that was not so apparent.

The duchess, though not a particularly vain person, was immensely flattered, and gave him the order at once for a full sized portrait of herself, and remarked, she would leave the price to his own discretion. "I wish to have it full size because my figure is about the best part of me, as it still retains its youthful suppleness and grace."

Mr. Huntington now considered that he was on the high road to fame and fortune. He was many months working on this valuable specimen of his art, and when completed, the duchess, who was more than satisfied with the success of the portrait, showed her satisfaction by giving an elegant entertainment at her palace, for its exhibition to her numerous friends and acquaintances.

Guy's head was somewhat turned by the ovation which was accorded him, and as he was invited to the ducal residence only in the capacity of an artist, it was not recognized that he had a wife.

A few days after this grand reception, Her Grace was at the studio, and stepping into a small room adjoining the large one, she saw a picture, framed, of considerable dimensions, covered with a curtain.

She called to Mr. Huntington : “ Pray what beauty have you here concealed ? ”

He drew aside the velvet hanging and revealed the full length portrait of his beautiful wife.

“ Why, whose picture can that possibly be ? ” cried she. “ It is a perfect, radiant Hebe. There is no such woman in society in Paris. Who was your model ? I am all curiosity to hear. ”

“ I am most happy to inform your ladyship that she is mine own, my excellent American wife, who took me before I was anything especial, in art or anything else, and by her influence and companionship she has been trying to lift me up to her ideals, indeed, I may say, to her own level. ”

“ Where is she ? ” cried the duchess. “ I had no idea you were a married man, and possessed such a treasure. Will you not be so good as to bring her to see me, as I should like also to rise to her level. My dear Mr. Huntington, we have so much in this life to keep us from raising our minds and thoughts to higher and better things, that such a woman as you describe your wife to be, with all her charm of beauty, doubtless is a powerful instrument in the hands of Providence, which could be used for the

purifying and elevation of everyone with whom she comes into contact."

Guy still had enough of good in him left to be even more gratified with this favorable comment on what he said of his wife, than even the fulsome praise he had received in approval of the superb portrait of the duchess. So, on returning home and finding Agnes with his wife, he related the conversation which had been held.

Nelly was of course pleased, but so true was she in her affection that her pleasure was more on account of the gratification it gave her husband, and of her hope that this might strengthen the tie of affection between them.

"Well, wife," said Guy, after the emotion of all three had subsided, for Agnes was even more impressed than Nelly by the compliments which had been paid to her friend, "when will you be ready to go with me to call upon this great lady?"

"Whatever time would suit you best, I will make convenient to do so. And do you not think it would be perfectly appropriate that Agnes should accompany me?" replied she.

"I shall call myself, to-day, upon Her Grace, and ask if I can take the liberty of having the original

of the portrait to accompany us when we wait upon her. I know that she will be pleased to meet you both," said Guy.

"Oh, dear!" exclaimed Agnes, "such a disappointment will await her that it will be no trifle to Her Grace. Your ideal picture of me will make me feel like hiding my head, and not having courage enough to stand the invidious comparison which she will make mentally."

"My dear Miss Sommerville, you know nothing, yourself, about your appearance. One cannot judge by the reflection of one's mirror what is the real aspect of one's looks. Your charm consisting principally in your expression, is not obvious in your mirror, consequently you are no fit judge of your own beauty or the want of it. I think it saves many a pretty girl from vanity, because the higher style of beauty depends so much more on the expression than on features. So cheer up, my little friend, and when I assure you that you are pretty enough for anything, let that suffice. You and Nelly are a charming contrast, and as sportsmen say, should always hunt in couples."

Nelly almost worshipped her husband, and certainly when he was with her, as he was what is

called a perfect gentleman in manner, he was always most courteous and kind. Now that Guy was exerting himself, and working laboriously to fill the numerous orders, coming from all directions, from the highest ranks, from the people of first consideration in society, as well as those who were less wealthy and prominent, Nelly began to fear for his health, and that his strength would give out.

She felt very solicitous, and gave up all her engagements to watch over and take care of her husband. She never left the house while he was in it, and took pains with her attire to look always fresh and attractive, and not to offend his fastidious taste in the least particular.

She procured the most lovely flowers, and made his studio charming and fragrant with them. She selected the finest fruits, and would slip in quietly with it, tempting him with luscious grapes, and other varieties, and often induced him to partake of them while she sat there, and entertained him with bright gossip and incidents that she thought would interest him.

Poor Nelly concealed her real feelings, which were those of apprehension for the future. She always met him on returning, after having been

out of the house, and gave him a warm welcome ; and to see to his comfort was her greatest pleasure. He was much touched by her great devotion ; but still, so great were the temptations held out to him by great ladies and women of the demi-monde, that he began to absent himself almost entirely, when not absolutely working. If men only knew, before too late, the value of a true woman's heart, and that woman a wife, they would be more chary of trifling with it and of throwing it aside as one does an old glove when tired of it.

CHAPTER IX.

THEIR friends, observing the frequent and continued absences of Guy from his wife and home, began to try to divert her mind by visiting her frequently ; and finding her interesting and at the same time interested in them—which is always pleasant to people—they were rather apt to overstay their time. Now that Guy was away so much from his apartments, Agnes redoubled her attention

to her friend, and insisted that she should accompany her frequently to all those amusements which are found so constantly in delightful Paris. As Nelly was exceedingly fond of music, the morning concerts were really a comfort, as well as a diversion. Her taste was becoming more and more improved by having the great advantage of hearing the best music performed by the most finished artists in the world. Then there were beautiful flower shows, and those attractions of the finest paintings of the old and modern masters in the galleries of the Louvre and other palaces.

Then the theatres and operas at night were a great delight to both of the friends. They went, on one occasion, to hear Sarah Bernhardt, and though they were very much fascinated by the wonderful display of her genius, yet the sphere of the woman seemed to pervade the whole place; and Nelly and Agnes said, afterwards, that they only managed to sit through the entertainment, for the effect on them was anything but agreeable. They both felt her powerful magnetism, but would not willingly come under its influence again on any account. How much, as an instrument, can a man or woman of genius accomplish, if they are fed

from the pure fountain of the living water of the Word of God ; for when man, though in possession of the highest genius, is not a suppliant for the grace of God, his powers become perverted, and do not accomplish that work for which purpose the individual was endowed with this natural ability.

Mrs. Huntington and her friend, Miss Somerville, had the advantage of knowing many prominent people in society, and through them they made many new acquaintances ; and among them was a German Count of immense wealth, a man of fine education, polished manners, and who was considered among the most important and conspicuous of the habitues of the Parisian world. During a drama, where the actors and actresses displayed a great deal of emotion, the attention of Count Albertson was attracted by the faces of these two naturally behaved and comparatively unsophisticated Americans. In high life, in Europe, the emotions are kept in abeyance by the frequenters of polite society, but not so much in Paris as in London and other British capitals. In English society the more stolid and imperturbable a man or woman is, the more elegant manner is he or she considered to have. The Germans are not nearly so self-contained, ex-

cept among people of the highest rank, even royalty itself, for they seem to act out their natural qualities more impulsively, and with greater simplicity.

These two lovely young women not only attracted the attention of the Count, but interested him so much that he ceased not by night or day to inquire where they were to be found and who their acquaintances were. Fortunately, as he thought, an Italian Count whom he knew slightly, who was Sir Antoine Roscoe by name, had made the acquaintance of the two ladies, and said that he had even called upon them by the invitation of the husband of one of them, who was a very distinguished artist.

“Do they reside at the studio?” inquired the Count.

“No, my friend,” replied Count Roscoe, “they are too independent in their circumstances for that. They have luxurious apartments in one of those quiet streets near the river.”

The one in which their apartments were had many old dwellings in it, but it was tolerably wide and airy. There was a small square or place near by their house, in which were some beautiful old trees, which varied the monotony which the rows of old buildings created. Nelly was perfectly satisfied

with her exterior surroundings and the interiors of the apartments which, though simply furnished, were made pleasant by a profusion of growing plants and flowers. Guy had hired a remarkably fine piano, and took pains to induce her to keep up the cultivation of her voice by practice, both with him and when she was alone. He was sufficiently aware of the fine quality of her vocal organ, and as they often sang together in society, he naturally wished her to sing surpassingly well. He had very little time for practice, but in their duos, the want of flexibility in his voice was even atoned for by the beautiful voice of his wife.

Count Albertson was disappointed when he found that they had a home other than the studio, for he had an idea that he could have his portrait taken, and so have more chance of meeting, as he thought, the entrancing Mrs. Huntington. Count Roscoe asked permission of the ladies to introduce his friend, Count Albertson, to their acquaintance. In a few days after receiving permission from Mrs. Huntington and her friend, the gentlemen arrived in a fine equipage, with out-riders and four spanking grays, and descending from their carriage at the apartment of Mrs. Huntington, were ushered up by

the footman into the small drawing-room. The ladies were practising their singing, when the Count stepped into the room. He being six feet high, with a very effusive manner, and though not really stout but yet well developed muscularly, he threw the Italian Count completely in the shade, and seemed to fill nearly the whole room with his presence. Miss Sommerville, who had a keen sense of the ridiculous, was struck by the contrast in the appearance of the two men. The Count had light coloring, fine complexion and an open, handsome countenance. The Italian, on the contrary, was under middle size, with dark hair and complexion, and a disagreeable sinister expression of countenance. With a sweeping bow, the German Count followed the other, in order to receive the gracious greeting of the ladies. After some bright and pleasant conversation, Count Albertson inquired if they would accept his box at the opera for that evening, saying that he would send his coach for them, and he hoped that Mr. Huntington, of whom he had heard so much, as an artist and a man, would waive ceremony and accompany the ladies to the theatre. Just at this time Mr. Sommerville came into the room. The Count immediately ex-

tended the invitation to him, and Nelly thought, as Mr. Sommerville would accompany them, she was right in accepting, although not sure that her husband would be able to go with them. American women, generally, have less knowledge of the world, and are consequently less suspicious of the motives of designing men than the women of foreign countries. When the evening arrived, the coach was sent to convey the ladies and Mr. Sommerville to the Opera House, where they were met by the Counts Albertson and Roscoe. The music being of a very delightful kind, Nelly and Agnes soon became absorbed, and found the libretto also quite interesting. The gentlemen amused themselves watching the expressive countenances of the two ingenues.

CHAPTER X.

AFTER the opera the Count insisted, although with great urbanity, upon their resorting to a very elegant café, where he had engaged a room in which was an elegant grand piano, and where a

most *recherché* supper was served. After partaking of this repast, accompanied by the most exquisite wines and cordials, the Count opened the piano and commenced playing in a masterly manner. This, of course, pleased the girls, and one of them asked him if he would not favor them with a song. He replied he had brought some music with him, and that if Count Roscoe would join, as he had a tenor voice and his own was a baritone, he would be willing to try what they could do. So after giving a spirited Italian barcarole, the Count turned on his stool and remarked: "I am sure you can both sing; it is perfectly evident you are both accomplished musicians. Is it not so; am I not correct?" And as they both smiled, he turned to Mr. Sommerville: "Can you not confirm my foregone conclusion?"

"Yes," said Mr. Sommerville, "I cannot deny that Mrs. Huntington sings very well, and my dear little girl here has a sweet bird-like voice that is very pleasant to her partial father. However, I wish to add that if it were unsupported by another voice, would scarcely please so good and fastidious a judge of the beautiful art as you, Count, evidently are."

“Will not Mrs. Huntington be so extremely obliging as to let me hear her dulcet tones?”

“Oh, yes,” said Nelly, “after your being so obliging, it would be worse than churlish in me to refuse, if my friend Agnes will join me in some of our unpretending duets.”

So they sang together some pretty Scotch ditties, in an unaffected way, which would not have been so charming had not Nelly's voice and style been just what they were. The gentlemen were most enthusiastic in their admiration, and then proposed having a quartet which proved to be a great success. Mr. Sommerville remarked, afterwards, that he felt almost guilty in hearing such music and enjoying it all by himself. The gentlemen both wished to propose that Mrs. Huntington should invite them to her apartment, and practice whilst there some songs and glees together, which would be good enough to afford entertainment, also, to some of the friends of the two ladies; but Count Albertson, being so well bred a man, did not wish on this early acquaintance to seem at all presumptuous, and treated the ladies with even more deference and distinction than if they had been of the highest rank.

Nelly did not care to have much company without her husband could be present, and so numerous had his engagements become that it was not possible, he said, to forego them. Though she felt inclined to gratify the wishes of the party, as she supposed she knew what both the gentlemen would like, but would not act impulsively, she would request her husband to spare one evening only, to meet them, as she knew he would enjoy the specially fine music which they would have. When the opportunity occurred, she made the request of Guy, and he said that every hour was filled with engagements, and could not possibly be broken. Agnes thought that Guy should not have hesitated a moment to grant this reasonable request of his most patient and forbearing wife. She remarked to Nelly: "If my father is present, will not that make it according to etiquette, and could we not dispense with your husband's presence on this occasion?"

Nelly said she would ask Mr. Huntington what he thought, and if he approved of it she would adopt Agnes' suggestion.

Before she had the chance of consulting her husband, she and Agnes were one evening together in the drawing-room, when Count Albertson was

announced. Nelly whispered to her friend: "Do not leave until he does."

The Count approached with a low graceful bow, and began complimenting the ladies in his own way, which was pleasant enough, but which should have only been addressed to Agnes, who was unmarried. He evidently admired Miss Sommerville, and spoke of having obtained one of her photographs.

"Oh, no," said she, "you cannot mean the photograph of myself, but only the one of my ideal portrait, which is much better looking than I ever was."

With some complimentary words, he took from his coat pocket a beautiful case of enamel and gold, set with precious stones, and opening it showed some remarkable jewels. He said carelessly: "These are rather fine stones, Mrs. Huntington."

They were set in a superb necklace, and were exceptionally fine diamonds of an unusually large size. He gently drew the necklace around Nelly's throat, and clasped it.

"How magnificent!" exclaimed Agnes. "I have never seen any to compare to them."

"Are they so," said Nelly, "but I cannot see them," and turning to Albertson, she said, "please undo them for me."

He replied: "Oh, no! Mrs. Huntington, I brought them here for your acceptance."

"You are surely joking, Count," she answered, "please undo the catch."

He shaking his head and smiling, she turned to her friend with: "Agnes, will you not try to relieve me of this?"

"I would rather not," said Miss Sommerville, and turning to the Count, "you had better do so, because I might injure the clasp. I should judge," continued Agnes, "that you, Count, were promised in marriage to some lady of very high rank, and this necklace was intended as a gift to her."

"Not at all," replied the Count, "they were intended for Mrs. Huntington, and if she will accept them it will gratify me beyond expression."

The Count had seemed to forget that Nelly had a husband in existence; and if he had not so shamefully neglected her, she would not have been subjected to this insult. She did not like to make it too serious, so she tried to turn it off by saying: "I do not like to be made the subject of such a joke;" and in a peremptory manner she exclaimed, "undo the necklace at once, Count Albertson."

He said: "Just take one glance in the mirror, Mrs. Huntington, and see how they become your style. You are precisely of that complexion and coloring that such gems become."

"Doubtless," said Nelly, laughing, "they would be becoming to almost any style, and if you promise to release me immediately upon my complying with your request, I will consent to take one glance."

He led her to the mirror, and such sparklers Nelly had never beheld before. He looked at her with much admiration in his expressive eyes, and his handsome features became softened and really tender in their enthusiastic appreciation of her loveliness and dignity; and sighing deeply, he undid the clasp. She cast upon him such a look that he was struck by the innocent compassion which it expressed, and he was conscious that she felt great sorrow for him, that he should have been betrayed into such a weakness.

He took a chair, some distance from them, and remained perfectly quiet for some time. Neither of the girls interrupted his meditation. During that time, his mind flashed back to his boyhood, when his beloved mother had taught him moral lessons which he was now forgetting. This is one

of the proofs that without something more to depend upon than morality, the most generous and sweetest natures will become selfish and perverted.

As a child, he had been an uncommonly obedient and unselfish son to his mother. His father had died in his infancy, and left this fine child, with great confidence, to the care of his wife, who was a woman of superior intellect, and strong will; and with an almost unbounded influence over her son, and also over her dependents. But, unfortunately for this young man, she had died before he was of age, and his uncle, who was his guardian, lived in another province, and did not trouble himself much about his ward, except to visit him in the hunting season, as the Albertson estate owned large forests in Germany which were full of game of various sorts, and even had numbers of ferocious boars.

These visits of his uncle's had only been beneficial in one way to the boy, and that was in cultivating his courage and his horsemanship, when his guardian spent some months with him during each year. But after those visits were over, he was left entirely to the care of the chaplain, and the old housekeeper, and a couple of tutors, who were not as disinterested as they should have been, and did not like to inter-

fere too much with the perfect liberties of the youth for fear that they might lose most comfortable and easy quarters, for the boy had only to complain to his uncle of any one of them, and he, selfishly—to save himself any trouble—would write the boy that he could turn them off and get others; so that those who had consciences were always dismissed by this self-willed and inexperienced youth.

After this long digression, we return to the drawing-room, where the trio were still seated.

CHAPTER XI.

OF course, all these thoughts did not pass through the Count's mind or memory, for he really was only quiet a comparatively short time, reflecting. He exclaimed, looking at Nelly: "Your husband can now afford to purchase the duplicate of this trifle, as he is becoming so very famous and wealthy."

"I would not accept so costly a bauble even from my husband. No one of less rank than a princess

should indulge in such an expenditure as that. Indeed, I have learned by my simple faith that to spend money in such useless things, for mere ornament, so lavishly, is not doing what the Giver of all things had intended that we should do. Why, Count, if that money were invested in an orphanage, cannot you imagine the inestimable good it might do to little children who are waifs and strays, and what an inestimable blessing it might be for this life? and in many instances the good effect would reach into eternity. Only to think, to appeal to you not even on the highest plane, what benedictions would be showered on your head, what supplications would be offered for blessings on you, and if you are conscious when your dying hour arrives, what a comforting thought the idea would be to you that your money had been the means of the salvation of the souls of these children."

"Why, my dear Mrs. Huntington, I did not know what a delightful preacher you might make. Thou almost persuadest me to be a Christian."

"Oh, Count! if I only could persuade you entirely to do this much for those little ones, who are friendless and suffering, neither you nor I would have lived in vain."

He arose from his seat, his face showing much emotion and also that a great impression had been made upon him, and shaking hands with each of the ladies, he departed.

The next evening, when Mr. Sommerville accompanied Nelly, Agnes and Guy to the house of the Duchess to attend a reception, after the usual greeting, Her Grace told Nelly that, as soon as her guests had ceased arriving, she wished to have a little private conversation with her. So, later on in the evening, she called Nelly, and they went together into her boudoir where they would be uninterrupted. Both taking seats, the Duchess began by saying: "My dear Mrs. Huntington, what spell have you cast over Count Albertson? He called upon me, yesterday, and said that he had some very serious conversation that he wished to hold with me, and important ideas to impart to me.

"He said he had just come from your house, and that you had made a proposal to him to do something for the good of others. 'My dear Duchess, she wants me to found an orphanage, which I am delighted to do, at her request, on account of the deepest regard and respect that I feel for her. If your Grace will be so kind as to take the matter in

hand for me, my purse shall be at your command for a sufficient supply; but I wish to make a proviso that her husband will allow it to be called "The Nelly Huntington Orphanage." If he will not allow his name to appear, I shall have to find some other title which will convey my appreciation of the gentleness and nobility of a true woman.'

"So, my dear Mrs. Huntington, I pray you consult your husband at once, and let us strike while the iron is hot; for I know the young man well, and I fear that some of his selfish, unprincipled companions will try to dissuade him, and give us a deal of unnecessary trouble."

She promised, at once, that she would do all in her power to forward a work which lay so close to her heart. Upon speaking to her husband about it, he told her he had no objection in any way, and he would consent that she could do all that was in her power to assist the Duchess in carrying out this work which seemed to interest her so much.

Nelly had a great love for children, and her disappointment was very keen that she had had no child. She had wished to adopt a little girl, but her husband would not consent, so she had to give

up the idea ; but in her heart she never had been reconciled to his objecting to it.

Her feelings went out to every poor child she met, and she would buy the papers, which they offered, from the boys, and the little nosegays from the girls, whenever they were presented to her, and then she would give them over to the concierge who was always delighted to receive them.

A few evenings after the visit spoken of, Agnes and her father were with Nelly in her apartments ; and Mr. Sommerville having a cold, his daughter thought they ought to go to his hotel earlier than usual. So, after a promise on Nelly's part to call and learn how Mr. Sommerville was next day, they departed, leaving her alone—she feeling rather depressed. She was so accustomed now to having her friend and her father with her, in the evening, that, to divert her loneliness, she began to play on the piano and sing some plaintive little songs in French.

Music was a great resource to her, and if she had had a little child of her own to love, with the society of her friend Agnes, to whom she was so much attached, she could have been comparatively happy. Her life had so many pleasant things in it,

and she was so much better off than most of the foreign women about her in her circumstances and situation, which facts, united with her strength of character which her early life of self-denial and industry had given her, that she might have passed as happy and peaceful a life as most women do. But, having no outlet for her abundant affection, except towards Agnes and her husband, she had not arrived yet at that philosophical state of mind which—unless we possess the true help—nerves us to bear the fortune which is sent us.

She still admired her husband, and felt grateful to him for having lifted her out of her obscure position, and for giving her the opportunity of education and of a broader, better life. She had been a most attentive student when first reaching Paris, and was now feeling the delight which the desire for knowledge gives to those who have that desire.

These little digressions are requisite, in this tale, in order to portray the gradual development of the character of this, I hope, to my readers, interesting woman. But to return to the apartment in which we left her seated at the piano.

The Italian Count Roscoe came in stealthily to the room, unannounced, having bribed the footman.

He took his seat near the door for a moment, and then, rising quietly, he approached Nelly on tiptoe. She was sitting with her face turned from him, but raising her eyes just then, to a mirror over the piano, she saw coming towards her this treacherous man. She turned on the revolving stool quickly, to face the enemy, but too late to avoid the audacious clasp of his arms. She arose and pushed him from her, and uttered a loud shriek. The butler, who was an honest man and not a scoundrel like the footman, ran upstairs, and entering the room, saw the Count shaking with laughter. Her maid, whom she had brought from America with her, came down to her assistance. She found her crying and sobbing, whilst the villain was trying to pass it over as a joke.

The butler went up to him, handed him his hat which he had placed on the sofa, opened the door of the room, and escorted him down. Before letting him out into the street, the man, who was large and strong, stood in front of the little cowardly Count and said: "You must be aware, sir, that Mr. Huntington will be informed of this outrage as soon as he returns, and you will doubtless hear from him."

A few evenings after, when Nelly had recovered from this unpleasant excitement, she and Mr. and Miss Sommerville were at the opera, enjoying one of Patti's great nights, when an usher came and announced to one of the actors, and requested that he would give it from the stage, that Mrs. Huntington's coachman wished to see her. They immediately arose, as they were much alarmed, and went to the street and were told that a messenger had been sent for them to return at once to the house. The coachman knew nothing more, so was told to drive as rapidly as possible through the crowded thoroughfares.

Upon reaching home, they found two doctors and some friends, besides the servants, awaiting them. They were told that there had been a duel, and that Guy was badly wounded and his opponent still more so. Upon reaching Guy, he said: "Wife, I must leave here to-night, to avoid arrest, for Count Roscoe will die."

"Who!" exclaimed she. "Did you fight that miscreant? Are you wounded by him?"

"He boasted, publicly, that he had embraced you, and I was told of it. When he was charged with it, he would not withdraw it; so I had to challenge

him. We agreed to fight in a room, and by gas-light. As I was a pretty good swordsman, and he had the choice of weapons and preferred swords to pistols, I was willing to agree."

"Are you badly wounded?" she said.

"I fear so," and looking at the surgeon, he said to him: "Tell her the worst, doctor; she will have to know it."

"Madam, I find it necessary to say to you that there is the smallest chance of life, if the patient is kept perfectly quiet; but if he is moved to-night, a hemorrhage will be produced, and death will inevitably ensue shortly—in fact, almost immediately."

"I will not," cried Guy, "even to recover, submit to arrest and trial for that villain's death. So, regardless of consequences, I must and will go at once. See that all is ready, dear wife, but do not come yourself, for that favor I do not deserve at your hands."

There was a yacht moored in the river, not far off, belonging to one of his friends, who was now in the house waiting to have him carried on board. Nelly went about attending to everything possible, but looking white as a lily and more like stone than living flesh.

Before daylight she had accomplished everything, and they were in readiness to start. Guy gave her directions about his papers and a few of his paintings that were still unsold, with great calmness, although he was suffering torture. His sincere repentance in this solemn hour, for the neglect of his wife, gave him enough fortitude and courage to use much self-control. He told Nelly that when it was all over she would arrange all his affairs. She could not reply with her lips, but she bowed her head and tried to smile. She suppressed her consuming grief for his sake, and listened to each word as priceless, bathed his brow, and imprinted kisses on his face and forehead—half distracted, but holding herself still under control; trying to forget herself in these awful moments, she remembered only what was for his good.

She lay down beside him when he clasped her hand and moaned with the pain of his wound. Nelly was a good girl, but she had not yet accepted the Divine Will as her will. How few of us ever do that fully, and most rarely in early youth. Her faith was shaken by the knowledge that her best beloved should be taken so soon from her. She felt that, had he lived, she would, by her loving

devotion, win him to better ways. She breathed a prayer for his soul, and he sobbed aloud.

“Guy, darling, can you not give yourself the shadow of a chance?”

“No, dearest, do not ask me to do that, even for your sake. I would die a thousand deaths in anticipation. Pray for me, dear wife; the prayers of so good a woman will be heard and answered.

CHAPTER XII.

THE friend who owned the yacht came to say that the bearers had come and must hasten away before dawn. One look around at her home, tears rolling down her pale cheeks, supported by Agnes and Mr. Sommerville, they joined the cavalcade and walked by the bier of the sufferer. Fortunately the yacht could lay at the white bridge near by, so unfortunate Guy was carried aboard and gently laid upon a couch, never to rise again.

They steamed as rapidly as possible out of the harbor and down the river, and as Guy was on deck

he saw the sun rise in beautiful clouds for the last time on this earth. The doctor had administered an anesthetic, so that his wound was not nearly so painful. His artistic eye, even in all this trial, caught the beauty of the scene, and he gave his wife one of his very sweet smiles.

“How beautiful is Nature,” said he. “It is proof that there must be a Creator of all this perfection. Nelly, I believe firmly in God, and trust He will forgive my weakness. My heart always loved you, Nelly ; it is my cursed vanity led me off from you. I thought we had a long life before us, and I could atone by my devotion, after this rush of popularity would subside, as it certainly would have done, and always has done in every case, and then you would understand why it was that I treated you with seeming indifference. But now, my dear, I am not granted that opportunity, but I have atoned in the only way that is left me, and that is by leaving you all of my belongings and every penny I possess.”

“Oh, hush ! hush ! my darling Guy, don’t speak of such things. You were not to blame. Your great talent attracted so much praise that circumstances must bear the blame. You will try to rest

now, Guy, for you know my love for you had never wavered. Our love and your kindness in so many ways will always dwell in my memory. So rest, now, my darling, and I will sing you to sleep."

In a soft voice she hummed a lovely hymn that he had been fond of before they were married. He slept only a few minutes, and awoke with his face flushed, indicating fever, which made him flighty, and he wandered in his talk.

"My pretty girl, can you tell me where the inn is? and she, with her flashing eyes and scornful lips, said: 'Yes,' and took me out and pointed under the willows. 'There,' she said, 'is what you call the inn up there, and we call tavern down here.' Now, Nelly, confess that inn is the better name of the two."

He smiled and looked at her, and her lips parted, saying: "Yes;" but no sound issued from them.

"How good and true she was," he continued, "and how brave when she saved my life, how tender when nursing me and suggesting comforts, and bringing each day some token of her love. How her voice soothed me, both when she sang and in talking. How she enjoyed, poor girl, my indifferent playing on instruments; I think now she would

scorn such music. But then, in her goodness, her expressive eyes would vary with the music; she looked so fearless out of those dark eyes into this dreary world, for she did not know its evils. Poor Nelly, she loved her rustic home, her flowers, her animals, and her various employments. And how happy she was with her good brother and her kind friend. I brought her a fleeting ecstasy of joy, but it was so short, sweet wife, so brief."

Though it was very gratifying to his wife to hear him speak of his early love and admiration for her, she felt like swooning away at times with grief.

"And in Paris! Was any one so beloved and admired as my good wife. She was one of Nature's noble women, refined through goodness, although she also had gentle blood in her veins. Heaven will be her eternal home, whilst I will be away from her and her love forever. God bless her always."

He sank into a quiet sleep in which he slowly and gently passed away.

CHAPTER XIII.

AFTER Mr. Huntington's death, they returned immediately to the city, and, fortunately, she had her two good friends, Agnes and her father, to accompany her. Mr. Sommerville proved quite equal to the occasion. Several of the intimate friends of the artist offered to him all the assistance which would be necessary. Nelly kept up, as she supposed they would wish to consult with her how to pay the greatest respect to this distinguished painter's memory.

They thought it was due to him, and his standing as an artist, to have a very large and elaborate funeral. In France, even the obsequies are accompanied with much show. Every acquaintance in the city, who was able to, joined in the solemn procession. And all of their friends, among whom was Count Albertson, were present on this mournful occasion.

Among the equipages which were present was that of the Count, and the Duchess sent her chariot as a mark of respect to the memory of the artist

who had distinguished her by painting so charming a portrait of her.

So they buried this young and promising man in one of the most beautiful cemeteries near Paris; and, in doing so, there was laid to rest one who should have triumphed over error and sin, for, though he had many temptations, he had also had many privileges and opportunities of gaining strength of character—and then a true helpmeet, in every respect, in his wife.

A beautiful tomb, designed by the sculptor who had offered to make a statue of Nelly, was finished many months afterwards and placed upon his grave. The sculptor had proposed that Nelly should allow him to represent her either in a weeping posture, or in one of prayer, instead of the tomb which she preferred should mark her husband's last resting-place. She refused Mr. Stone on the ground that it would be too great and distressing an exaction to be made upon a wife, after the sudden and tragic death (as was that) of her husband. She thought that fresh flowers, the loveliest that could be procured in each season, would be the most appropriate offering she could make to his tomb.

During the time she remained in Paris, after the funeral, she carried a profusion of the most beautiful blossoms that she could find to the sacred grave. On leaving the city, she deposited a sum of money with a friend who resided permanently there, the interest of which was to be devoted to the placing of beautiful plants and abundance of flowers on this spot, the most dear to her on earth.

The young widow felt her bereavement most keenly, and Mr. Sommerville advised her return to her native country, and her own home, as being the best means of restoring her tone of mind, and healing her lacerated feelings. To be once more with her dear brother, and to be surrounded by all those scenes to which she had been so partial, before a greater affection had obscured them in her esteem, he thought would be the most efficient and durable cure for her terrible affliction and troubled heart.

So the Sommervilles remained with her until she was sufficiently recovered from the prostration which the shock and tragedy of her husband's end had been to her. As soon as it was evident that she could stand the voyage, they made arrangements to

cross in one of the best steamers, where the most favorable accommodations could be secured.

Both Mr. Sommerville and his daughter needed the stimulant (as well as the widow) of an ocean trip; for, from sympathy from both, and unwonted exertion on Mr. Sommerville's part, they were really in great need of rest.

As the weather was very delightful, with no contrary winds, and only a few soft showers of rain, they were able to remain on deck nearly every day, and all day, during the entire voyage. Agnes and her father felt almost immediately the benefit derived from the pure and strengthening air, but Nelly, of course, could not expect to recover her equilibrium so rapidly.

Although Rob felt great sympathy for his sister, yet at the same time he was so glad to have her back again, that it was a very blended feeling. He was on the dock, in Boston, when they disembarked, and after a tearful embrace by Nelly, and a warm clasp of the hand from Agnes, and a real heartfelt greeting from Mr. Sommerville, Rob could not help showing his satisfaction, although he tried to restrain any undue exhibition of it. Although his sister had never complained of her husband in her

letters to her brother, yet he had inferred from some observations that she was not as happy as she had been, and had somewhat divined the true state of the case. In the course of a few hours, Mrs. Huntington was safely conducted to her small, but comfortable cottage by the sea.

PART II.

THE EGMONT BROTHERS.

DURING their protracted stay in Europe, Mr. Sommerville and his daughter went to England to visit a half sister of his deceased wife. She was the offspring of a second marriage of Mr. Marshall, the grandfather of Agnes. She was much younger than her half sister, and was delighted to meet her niece and brother-in-law from America. The grandfather of Agnes had always been very fond of her mother, who was his oldest daughter, and had tried to interest Miss Clara Marshall in her family. He had kept up a correspondence with his relatives, in America, during his life, but he had, as well as his wife, been deceased for some years. All intercourse was suspended for a time between the different members of the family in England, and on this side of the water.

Miss Marshall had inherited a very large fortune from her mother, and as she had lived so retired a life, and had remained unmarried, she had spent but a small part of her income each year. She had but little enterprise or vivacity, and not cultivating the friendship of many people, she had not dispensed (as she now began to feel) the large means, which she had in her power, in the method or the liberal spirit which she ought to have done; so now, she thought, here was her opportunity of retrieving her error. She had gained great confidence in her niece, who had impressed her as not only having benevolence, but also a sound judgment. The new ideas which Miss Sommerville had imbibed from Mr. Huntington, and from other sources, had fallen on good ground, and the seed was springing up into life, and all through her daily walks, producing pleasant looks and kind acts, and much consideration for others. Her aunt was so attracted to her that she changed her will, leaving Mr. Sommerville a full competence during his life, which was afterwards to go to Agnes, and also the latter was to inherit her large estate, and all the remainder of her possessions. She bade her niece adieu, with many expressions of affection and

much reluctance, as she wished her and her father to remain with her, and had even tried to persuade him to leave his daughter, even though he could not do so himself. He had consented, but Agnes refused to be separated from her father.

On parting with her, Miss Marshall presented Miss Sommerville with a considerable sum of money, with which she was to do as she pleased, for her aunt remarked to her, that she knew her pleasure would be to promote the happiness and the well-being of others, with not only her money, but her thoughts and attentions. Mr. Sommerville was highly gratified at the affection shown by his daughter's aunt towards her, and said, that though they could not stay now, they would, if Providence permitted, return as soon as possible and remain with her as long as it was practicable. But, six months after Miss Marshall had bade them adieu, she bade adieu also to this sublunary sphere, and it is to be hoped that she would dwell in one, in which she would be both useful and contented, where she would know more surely the best way of life.

But to return to the cottage. Robert Grant, having fallen heir to a good many thousand dollars from

his sister Nelly's husband, had tried to do his share of good work by instituting a co-operative store, of which he had the supervision. He did not give up his business of fishing, for he was fond of the sea, and liked the work that he had on it and the produce from it. Because he had some fortune, he neither wished nor expected to indulge in idleness; and though now he owned a small fleet of fishing smacks, and a number of men were engaged under him as toilers of the sea, yet he not only supervised but exerted himself to make everything work to advantage. The idea of independence was dear to this free-hearted, brave man. The first thought that occurred to him, after getting the good news of the handsome legacy from Mr. Huntington, was of the amiable young girl to whom he had become much attached; and he said: "Now I can approach her with the hope of having a home of my own before many years, and will be justified in asking her to share it with me."

Miss Sommerville, after being with her afflicted friend, Mrs. Huntington, for some weeks, now finding each day that her home and a brother's care and companionship, and all her outdoor surroundings, were beginning to soothe and even interest her

truthful mind, which was incased in such a healthy person, concluded that she must now turn her thoughts to disposing of some of her surplus cash. She knew a half dozen or more girls, in the neighborhood of Seaport, whom she thought were intelligent and reliable enough to accept good and thorough training as nurses for the sick. She purchased a favorable site, in a high and healthy situation near the village, on which to erect a free though not extensive hospital. So nurses would be needed. Her father, an experienced man of business, was ready to aid her, with the assistance of a young lawyer who had wandered to Seaport in search of rest and recreation, and who, being pleased with the climate, the splendid fishing and the energetic character of the people, had lingered on and on from week to week. He resided in Boston, and although his business might suffer somewhat in his absence, being also an author, he occupied his leisure partly in composing and writing books of various kinds. He was inspired by the scenery and the surroundings to even write verses. He was beginning to realize, however, that he must tear himself away from this too-delightful spot.

But just before he began to prepare to leave, he met Mr. Sommerville whilst they were both fishing in the stream in two small boats, and rendering the old gentleman some slight assistance, they rowed their skiffs together for some distance. As the young lawyer, Mr. Hubert Egmont, had a small lad with him, Mr. Sommerville proposed that he should send him away with his boat, and come to his home and take dinner with him.

“If you will be entirely alone, my good friend,” replied Mr. Egmont, “I might venture to accept your invitation. But surely not in this rig, if others are to be present.”

“There will be time to send to your inn, for change of garments, before dinner, so do come and partake of our family repast.”

Mr. Sommerville was so entertained by the vivacity and intelligence of Hubert's remarks, and having heard some of the neighbors speak of him before, he was prompted to pursue the accidental acquaintance, as it was evident that he was a man of gentlemanly habits, and accustomed to good society. On reaching the house, the footman called Mr. Sommerville's valet, who conducted the guest to the privacy of a room, and at length brought

him the suit of clothes, which had been sent for, to the inn. Arrayed in these garments, he was almost a different man, for he was apt to be rather careless, unless dressed for an occasion. Good dress was a great improvement to his appearance. There are some men who look their best, and are picturesque in an undress. Although he had a fine figure, a more formal attire was most becoming to him. Agnes was surprised, as she had met him on the river fishing, but did not recognize him as the same person, until he recalled some incident which had occurred by which she identified him. Mr. Somerville consulted him in reference to the business of the hospital, and was pleased with his prompt judgment and evident ability in the law.

Hubert wrote to two well-known law firms in Boston for credentials, and received them immediately, introducing him most favorably, eulogizing his knowledge, standing and character.

CHAPTER II.

NOW that Mr. Sommerville was assured of his position in the business community of Boston, he decided to ask him to take complete charge of the management of the estate belonging to his daughter, which she had recently inherited from her aunt, Miss Marshall, in England. Thus Mr. Hubert Egmont was made law agent for Miss Sommerville, and took his departure, in the course of a few weeks, to the scene of his future labors. Mr. Sommerville made a trip to Boston to assist Hubert in getting ready to sail for Europe.

We are now going back a short period for the purpose of introducing his brother, Rev. Horace Egmont, who had recently resigned his pastorate in Boston on account of his opinions having become too much advanced for the congregation. He had hoped to bring it up to his own views; but some of the older and very conservative members, who had more influence through their means than others had (for, unfortunately, it requires money to sustain churches), held back, and the incumbent minister concluded his work was not with them, but that he

would be led to a set of people who were more liberal in their ideas, in the Lord's own good time. He was very popular with the younger members of the congregation, but the older ones had the rule, on account of the finances. When will this world be rid of mercenary influences? Even the streams from the fountain of God's truth are often sullied by them, though not at their source. There they are always bright and clear, and the freer they can flow, and the more force they can gather, will enable them in time to rid them of all such impediments. One is tempted to exclaim, how long, O Lord, how long will it be before the blessed time arrives?

Hubert had met Nelly at Mr. Sommerville's, and was much struck by her charm of manner and her appearance. He mentioned her to Horace, and also spoke of his admiration of Mrs. Huntington to her friends, Mr. and Miss Sommerville. It appeared that the Rev. Horace had been in the steamer on which the widow and her party had returned to their homes. When Hubert mentioned their names to him, he observed: "Why, I came over with Mrs. Huntington and Mr. Sommerville. I was much pleased with Mr. Sommerville and his daughter,

but I think the widow the most interesting and attractive woman I have ever met."

"O Horace," said his brother, to whom all this was addressed, "you know that you are so easily impressed by female charms that I do not value your opinion very much."

"She was very much depressed in spirits," rejoined Horace, "grieving for her husband, who was not the best in the world, so I have been told, and if she gets a really fine man, she will see her folly and recover from it."

"So, brother mine," said Hubert, "you were hit harder than is usual with you, but I guess you will survive it."

When Mr. Sommerville and the Rev. Mr. Egmont met, they were mutually pleased, and Horace was invited to the home in Maine, to fill the pulpit temporarily, to see whether he would accept a call to the pulpit of the church near Seaport; for the minister who had now charge of the church in the country neighborhood, had found, as he had a delicate chest, a northern climate too severe for him. He had expressed his intention to Mr. Sommerville, of resigning his charge in a few weeks, after his first intimation of his design. The Egmont brothers

had a general family resemblance, but so diverse were they in character that they produced an entirely different effect on their friends and acquaintances. They were both tall and well-formed, and had a similar coloring; but Hubert's hair had more brightness in it, and the expression of his eyes was more intense and keener, at times, than that of his brother. He was of a more determined nature. Horace held himself as a military man would, in carriage, for he was a Soldier of the Cross. He walked very rapidly, and was swift and direct in all his actions.

Hubert was more deliberate, and consequently more graceful, and rather loitered along his path, although his character was more decided even than that of his brother. So this shows that outward indications are not always true of the internal man. They were both remarkably industrious, and the sense of duty was paramount in both. Their belief was that work was not only necessary to happiness, but, at certain times, went far towards achieving the redemption of the world, when actuated by noble motives.

A few days after this, Mr. Sommerville departed for his home, and the Rev. Horace followed him in

a short time. The weather proving very fine, they enjoyed in company some good hunting and fishing, and extended their boating expeditions out into the ocean itself. Rob accompanied the two gentlemen on their excursions, and though he caught most of the fish, yet they had sufficient luck to satisfy them with the sport. One day Rob was in a small boat alone, and had been following a very large, fine salmon for several hours, even more for the game than the profit. Just as he succeeded in hauling it aboard, Mr. Sommerville and Horace hove in sight, in a larger boat. They saw Rob embrace the fish, and throw himself back in the boat with the prize. Then he began to shout and halloo triumphantly, throwing his feet up as a relief. The two gentlemen rowed their boat close by his, and Mr. Sommerville called out: "Why Bob, what ails you, boy? Are you clean daft?"

"No indeed, sir. Look what luck I have had. Isn't he a stunner? That will bring me a ten-dollar bill in Boston."

"That salmon will never see Boston; or, rather, the good people of Boston shall never eat that salmon. I will give you ten dollars for it, with much pleasure, and you shall help to eat it yourself, Bob."

Mr. Sommerville had designed to have a dinner party, and here was his first-class opportunity. He invited the Rev. Horace, and on Mrs. Huntington's account, whom he hoped to persuade to dine with them on the salmon, he asked no one else but an intimate friend of Miss Sommerville's, who was staying at their house. The dinner came off next day, and Agnes and her friend exerted themselves to make the party pass off pleasantly, and they were succeeding passably well. Miss Agnes raised her eyes several times to Rev. Mr. Egmont's face, who was conversing with her, and found that he was gazing at her friend, Mrs. Huntington, who seemed embarrassed by his evident admiration. His manner was always attractive, but more so when his sympathy was aroused; and on this occasion he was feeling a good deal of emotion. He was rather reserved and dignified, ordinarily, but being excited, he expressed more freely than usual some of his thoughts on spiritual things.

Agnes discovered that his doctrines and opinions coincided with hers exactly, and after one or two of her observations, he remarked: "Where did you learn these excellent truths, Miss Sommerville?"

“From a person whom you did not know ; but please to speak in lower tones, for it was from my friend’s husband. His father belonged to a peculiar sect, and he took much pains to instill what he considered very valuable doctrines into the mind of his son, when quite young.”

Notwithstanding they had lowered their voices, the widow caught the meaning of what they were saying. “Poor Guy,” said she, “would have lived them, in his after life, had he only have been spared.”

A look of extreme sadness came over her face, and this caused an expression which added to her beauty, and made it even more effective ; so much so, that a great impression was made on the rather unsusceptible heart of the young minister.

Agnes was much pleased to realize this state of affairs, for she hoped she saw, in the future, more real and lasting happiness, in store for her friend, than she ever yet had experienced. She knew the superiority of this young man’s character, and of his mental ability, and did not doubt of a great success for him in the work in which he had chosen to develop and accomplish his life’s ends. She thought that his influence, through his peculiar

doctrines, would benefit her friend more than any thing else could do ; but she knew time would be necessary to obliterate the shock and trial of Guy's last sad ending. Nelly was still much absorbed in her sorrow for one who was not worthy of such continued grief, and it would require some very inspiring affection to make her willing to venture again on the sea of matrimony.

She could not but admit, in talking to Agnes, that though Guy was very repentant, that he did neglect and forsake her ; and though he tried to atone by leaving all his fortune and possessions to her, with the exception of the handsome legacy to her own brother, the fact still remained. But he had been her lover and her husband, and had been very indulgent to her ; and only during a short period before his death had he not been most attentive to her. So she made her mind up not to be inveigled into meeting this man again soon, for she was aware that he was beginning to take a peculiar interest in her. She had caught his glance several times, which expressed great admiration, and his manner towards her was peculiarly gentle. As she attended the church in which he preached, she of course listened to his eloquent sermons several times a week.

She found that his discourses were exactly to her taste, finding such good sense in his doctrines, and so much earnestness in exhorting his hearers, not only to give part of their lives, but their hearts and all their powers to God and His service.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN the widow had first returned from France, and was settled in her home, she wore a gray gown, with which her brother Rob was so pleased, for (like most men) he disliked black assumed as mourning. “Why, sister, what a nice, pretty dress you have,” he exclaimed when meeting her, when she first wore it after her return; “I am glad to see that you will not confine yourself to dismal black gowns. But why do you not follow the bad example of other people, who think they must show their grief by their clothes?”

“My dear brother, my husband did not approve of such mourning, and made me promise never to adopt it, even for you, dear Bob, if I had the mis-

fortune to lose you, and especially for his dear self. In conversation, I found that the tenets which the young minister holds also disapprove of that outward mourning."

"I should really like to know more of such a sensible religion," said Bob.

"Well, go with me next Sunday to the church, and hear the sermon of the new minister, and you will hear good common sense, and some uncommon, too."

Since the arrival of Mr. Egmont, Agnes and Nellie had exerted themselves to the utmost to improve the music and singing of the choir. The former had bought a large, handsome organ, and a young man coming to the neighborhood as a teacher, in one of the schools, was found to have an exceptional musical talent, playing the organ as well as other instruments. He was at once engaged at a good salary, and being enthusiastic, rendered efficient aid to the two ladies in their efforts. Agnes, having money sufficient to devote to this cause, had teachers occasionally from a large town near by, to drill, train and instruct the youths and maidens of the church in singing. Agnes was so pleased to see that Nellie's love of music was taking such a direc-

tion as to be not only entertaining, but very useful in the service of the church. Mr. Egmont had a fine voice, and often attended the rehearsals and received encouragement, and instruction also, from the teachers and also the two ladies, who were each proficient in the musical art. Agnes also became interested herself, and induced her friends to become so, in a club which they called the Helping Hand Club, where each member must try to do something for some one else each day of the year.

They began together to visit the poor in the neighborhood, and as they became more experienced they also became more and more judicious in the treatment of the cases which would arise. Nellie was peculiarly practical; having spent her days in her early youth in an humble life, she knew just how to approach the poor without giving offence or wounding the feelings of those she wished to benefit. The Rev. Horace, of course, made parochial calls, and it was rather surprising, how often they met, and apparently so accidentally.

He observed her methods with the people whom she was trying to help, and was struck with the kindness of her manner, but also with its firmness, and he could not help seeing that these were the

very qualities which are peculiarly suitable for a minister's wife. He admired her personality very much, although he had always declared that very slim girls had his fancy. Nelly was tall, but not very slim. She was finely formed and well developed, and he would have been indeed difficult to please if he had not admired the beautiful figure which a most distinguished sculptor had singled out for a model and for his own admiration. She was now a very cultivated and accomplished woman, and far superior to Nelly Grant, was Mrs. Guy Huntington.

Agnes thought that, if the minister only knew what he was about, he would press his suit before his brother returned, for then he could not walk over the route undisputed. Hubert, before leaving, had several times expressed his great admiration for the widow, and, as Agnes admired Hubert specially, she thought there would be little chance for anyone else, if he once entered the field. Just at this time, her father received a letter from Hubert, saying he would return to Boston on such a date, and could not Mr. and Miss Sommerville meet him there, as there was some business to be attended to, and some papers to be signed. He

was about leaving England at the date of the letter, so in a few days Agnes and her father started from Seaport neighborhood, and Nelly was left alone to the care and attention of Horace. He took advantage of the opportunity, and saw her as often as it was possible; and they were at last seen strolling on the sands together, and all the parish had it settled at once.

The match met with the approbation of almost everyone, for Nelly was very popular in the neighborhood, and, as the minister was becoming more and more so, they hoped that the marriage tie would cause him to remain as incumbent to the church. But Nelly was not so easily won. Horace was not a man of the world; he had no idea of how to pay those little attentions so requisite, in many cases, to win the female heart. He never thought of sending a flower, he never paid her a compliment, except by manner, and she, who had been so accustomed to all the finished attentions of Frenchmen and artistic people, might be supposed to miss it and almost resent it. But, to tell the truth, the absence of these very little things, to which she had been so much accustomed, of which she had learned the want of sincerity, and to which

she looked back with so much sadness, proved a refreshing contrast; and at last, when he did manage to summon courage to make her a proposal, asking her if she thought that time would, with the assurance of his sincere affection, make her willing to join him in his life's work, for he desired that she might understand fully that he was, and hoped always to be, a most busy worker, and would not have as much time to devote, in attention to a wife, as men generally have; but that, if she had similar views, they would work together, and thus enjoy each other's companionship whenever it was possible, Nelly, looking up at him, met his honest eyes without flinching, except that she blushed deeply, and replied: "Oh, Mr. Egmont, if anyone else had said those words to me, indicating a proposal of marriage, I could never forgive him. But, as you say you wish me for your companion to work, I will not now give you a negative for an answer, for I will, if you desire it, give myself time to discover if I could, as a matter of duty, join you for life. But you must understand distinctly that I can give no love to anyone, for that is buried in a foreign country, and you are surely worthy of a good woman's entire devotion."

Horace took her hands, and, as she looked into his face, he stooped and lightly imprinted a kiss on her lovely lips. This caress went like an electric shock through her whole being, for she felt that so pure was his nature, that a heavenly love had suggested it. Her soul was stirred, and, on looking in his face, she saw such emotion that she felt his affection for her was real devotion to what was good and elevated in her, and not only to her very attractive personality. She felt the inspiration of his goodness and unselfishness radiating from him to her.

So the matter seemed to be accomplished; but Nelly still did not consider it so, although Horace was in high spirits, and had almost, he thought, concluded an engagement. He knew that he could not marry unless the lady whose fate he wished to unite with his had some means. For his salary, though quite liberal, only at present sufficed for his own expenditures, as he was of a very generous nature, and dispensed his means rather too liberally. To ask anyone to live with him on his pay was asking, he considered, so great a sacrifice that it was not to be thought of. He had been told by Mr. Sommerville that Mrs. Huntington was in independent circumstances, but he had no idea that

she was far more than that—indeed, was rather wealthy. She continued to live in the cottage, and, although she had built a wing, which was much larger than the original house, yet it was still a very simple structure. She retained her fondness for a rural life, and had some very choice animals, and had also had built a very complete dairy-house over the branch of a stream which ran near her cottage. She still had butter made from her cows, and it was of such superior quality that, as she could not buy any equal to it, she said she would still continue to have it made. It is not a certainty that she did not sometimes help to weigh and print it herself. All the profits of that which was sold went to the poor of the little village.

CHAPTER IV.

HORACE was now welcomed to her house, and Rob was becoming more and more interested in the conversations which he held with him and his sister, who introduced the subject of the new

ideas which she had imbibed from Agnes, and upon which Mr. Egmont would enlarge. Rob attended the Sunday services quite regularly. At last he broke out with : " Why, sister, the parson is a No. 1 man, and I can see and am told by others that he lives what he preaches. I believe in him, so it will end by my believing his doctrines."

Rob began now to perceive, that this No. 1 man was being attracted by his sister, and secretly rejoiced, but knew he would have to proceed slowly. Poor Nelly still had her fits of depression on account of the loss of one whom she had loved, and she thought she never could love any one else. But Nelly's standard of what a man should be was being gradually raised from the intellectual to the spiritual plane of being, so that Guy was not really now her ideal.

We will now follow Agnes and her father on their travels, who, after spending a fortnight in Boston, where they saw and heard everything worth hearing and seeing, at length wrote announcing their return to their home. The carriage was dispatched to meet them at the terminus, and Hubert, who had accompanied them for only a few days' visit, saying that he wished to see his brother, took a seat in the

carriage, and when passing through the village he asked Agnes: "Does not my brother live in this place?"

"Just outside at a neat house, where he enjoys the open air on the lawn, the pretty porches, and in the little garden attached to the house."

"I know," said Hubert, "that my brother loves the freedom of a country life as much as I do."

When they had stopped the carriage at the little house, Miss Sommerville said archly: "I do not think it likely that you will find him here." And so the maid who opened the door confirmed her statement. They invited Hubert to go on with them, and after obtaining a change of clothes in a travelling bag, he re-entered the coach.

"What made you say I should not find him here, Miss Sommerville?" inquired he.

"Because I had reason to suppose that he has a more agreeable place of resort." She glanced at the young man, and saw the color surge over his face, and then leave it very pale. Hubert had met the widow once or twice, and he knew that she was the only one in that neighborhood, beside Agnes herself, whom Horace could visit.

It seemed now that she had made an impression upon Hubert very suddenly, but very deeply.

Agnes, seeing all this emotion, thought now we will have some brotherly affection tested, if they prove to be rivals. A servant was sent, when they reached Englewood, to the house of Mrs. Huntington to deliver a note of invitation to the lady, and he had one also for Rev. Horace, to be delivered to him if he was found there. They were sitting on the vine-clad porch—Nelly embroidering a drapery for the church, and Horace reading a little book, which had just been issued, called “The Wedding Garment,” which was interesting them both. They were very happy in each other’s companionship, though Horace had not pursued the subject on which his mind had been, and was still, very intent. He was waiting with patience, and with almost assured hope, that he would gain his suit. The servant having brought the notes which were sent by Agnes, and presented them on a salver to Mrs. Huntington, she began to read hers, and turned and asked him what his contained.

He said, “I am in no hurry, for I guess the contents of the notes are similar.”

She finished reading hers, and said: “I am asked to join Mr. and Miss Sommerville to meet your brother.”

“That is the purport of my note, also.”

“I shall go over in good time; and you—” she said, interrogatively.

“I will remain with you, and escort you over after reading a chapter or two more of this interesting volume.”

“O do not remain on my account, I pray,” said Nelly.

“O no; I stay on my own,” said he, with his pleasant smile.

She could but return his smile, for it was contagious. It was becoming more and more difficult to refrain from responding to his demonstrations of admiration and affection, but she still held out against full surrender.

She had thought that as long as her brother was happy and contented with her affection and association, that she would be with his, and would take pleasure in devoting herself to his happiness and comfort. But one who has had ties of another nature, can but feel the great difference between that of a brother, no matter how kind, and a husband's attentions. Although Guy had not been so devoted in the latter days of his wedded life, now that he had passed from her vision forever, her thoughts

went back to the happy time that they had spent together soon after her marriage, when his attachment seemed equal to hers. Beside, Rob had by this time given his best affection to the young girl who had helped him nurse Mr. Huntington back to health, after the disaster that he met with on the water. She was one of the young women chosen by Agnes to be trained as a nurse, and she had gone, under her auspices, to a school in Boston for nurses, and had continued her education by taking charge of some of the wards in the free hospital, that had been instituted by this good girl, near Seaport. Rob and Gertrude Harcourt (for such was her name) had kept up a voluminous correspondence, and if Nellie had not been so absorbed by the minister's attention he could not have preserved his secret of his marriage engagement as long as he did from his sister. So Nelly was beginning to feel the preoccupation of mind which such engagements generally produce in those concerned as a little trying to her in Rob occasionally; and Agnes having been away from home, she was more thrown for resource on the minister's attention.

The pleasant afternoon now sped along on the piazza, diversified by tea and cake, and whilst the

phaeton was being gotten ready, Nelly ascended to her chamber and added some few touches to her becoming attire, which enhanced her charms. When the carriage was brought around, and the lad mounted the rumble, Horace took the reins. He was rather struck with the style and spirit of the horses, and the elegance of the carriage, and even at the boy's fine livery. The swift pace of the animals gave him cause to exercise his skill as a whip, but he was very fond of driving rapidly, as he generally did everything else. Nelly proposed taking a little turn beyond Englewood, as they had time sufficient before the dinner hour, and she wanted to learn the ability of the minister to manage a spirited pair of nags. A woman can somewhat judge of a man's character by that very test. When they reached their place of destination at last, Agnes and Hubert came forward on the grand old piazza to welcome them. Agnes was robed in a light pink gown, with natural flowers *en corsage*, and a string of pearls in her hair. She certainly looked very lovely and captivating. Nelly wore a white gown of some soft clinging texture, made very simply, showing off her beautiful form to advantage, and being extremely becoming. Her rich hair and color,

the latter of which rose to a blush on seeing Hubert, was certainly very striking; and he, with his eyes flashing with delight at seeing her, and also his brother, of whom he was very fond, made him laugh out joyously, which he always did whenever pleased. He looked quite as attractive as the widow, and as they stood together a more beautiful pair have seldom been beheld. Horace was truly delighted to see him again, but never was so demonstrative in his feelings as his brother, and he felt at once, as an intuition, the admiration which Nelly and Hubert could not avoid manifesting for each other. After the first impression of Hubert's appearance had somewhat worn off, she turned to Horace and received his attentions much more graciously than usual.

Agnes was fain to try to entertain Hubert and divert his thoughts from what he so plainly showed filled them. This dear little woman was so amiable, kind and lovable too. Hubert began to see his brother's devotion to the widow, so his better nature came to his aid, and he turned to Agnes with an effort, which at last conquered his thoughts of self, and made him appreciate her kindness and attention. Mr. Sommerville, who had been detained on busi-

ness, now entered the room and greeted Horace with much kindness and cordiality. They all repaired to the dining room, and Hubert, exerting all his powers, entertained Agnes and her father, and left the widow to the attentions of his brother. After the dinner was concluded, Horace asked Nelly to walk out under the trees with him, and Agnes proposed to her father to adjourn to the music room, where there was a very fine organ, an excellent grand piano, and Agnes's elegant harp, that she had brought from France with her, and an old valuable violin, on which her father performed beautifully.

So as Hubert played the piano, and read music well at sight, Mr. Sommerville, who was very much delighted at the idea of entering into so pleasant an amusement, got together his music books and those of Agnes, and they were very soon interested in playing duets and trios on the three different instruments—the harp, piano and violin—which, being very superior instruments, and two of the performers very proficient, they really succeeded in producing some most excellent music. Not very long after they began, Nelly, hearing the strains at the foot of the lawn where they had been straying, proposed to the Rev. Horace to return at least near

enough to the house to be able to enjoy the music. Then, when Hubert began to sing, she could resist the attraction no longer, but ascending the steps, entered one of the French windows into the music room, followed by Horace. Horace knew now that he would be cast into the shade completely by the talents and brilliancy of his brother, in his musical performance. Mr. Sommerville, laying down his violin, approached Mrs. Huntington and asked her if she could not be induced to sing a trio with his daughter and Mr. Hubert Egmont, while Agnes accompanied them at the same time on her harp. Horace had not very much talent for music, though possessor of a fine baritone voice, and he had learned to accompany himself on the organ. He sat down to listen to the impromptu concert with a very mingled feeling of delight with the music, and a certain sense of disappointment.

Hubert, although half in love with Nelly, resolved not to annoy his brother by paying her any attention ; so he devoted himself to Miss and Mr. Sommerville. Agnes having heard Horace sing, now asked him to favor them, offering to accompany him either on the piano or the organ. He preferred the latter, as he said it helped his voice, and he was

accustomed to the instrument. He chose a beautiful sacred piece of music, and sang it with so much purity of intonation, and with such a rich, soft volume of sound, that those present were both delighted and surprised. It was on a plane of elevation that Horace always appeared at his best.

This room in which this delightful music was made, had been built by Agnes, after her return from England, on improved scientific principles, and both Hubert and Horace observed how much more easily they could sing in that room than in any other they had ever tried. They remarked this to Mr. Sommerville, and he said that great care and pains had been taken in its construction and its acoustic possibilities. So after a very delightful evening, Mrs. Huntington bade them all adieu, giving an invitation to the whole party to dine with her the next evening, with the promised acceptance by all. A close carriage, with one of her maids, had been brought over by her careful coachman, in which she was to return. Rob met her at the door at home, and apologized for not having gone for her, as he had not known of the invitation of Miss Sommerville, which had also included him, but he had reached home too late to attend the party, and

the servant knowing this, had neglected to give it to him. The carriage had departed, therefore, without being driven to the house, so he knew nothing of it until he heard the horses coming up the drive, and went to the door to meet his sister. After she had recounted the pleasures of the evening, and told him of the beautiful music to which each one of the party had contributed, he said :

“ Well, Nelly, there is only one compensation for me, in having missed all these delights, and that is, that I should have been the only one who could not have added to the enjoyment of the others.”

“ Well, Rob,” said his sister, “ that is surely your own fault, for you certainly have a good voice, but it lacks cultivation very much, my boy, and you lack the industry which that cultivation would require to accomplish anything.”

“ No, sister, neither industry nor perseverance do I lack, but the time. This world is too busy a world for a man like me, who sees the sufferings and necessities of so many people, to spend time in mere accomplishments, when I could so much better devote it to more real earnest work for the benefit of mankind. I am sure that the Rev. Mr. Egmont could not be induced to spend time in such a manner.

He, having remarkable talent, can acquire anything he chooses very rapidly, but I should have to spend more time, and work harder by half than he would; and then a mental worker requires that sort of recreation which I do not, thank heaven."

Hubert and Horace returned to the little cottage that evening, and both passed a restless night. They were beginning to admire Agnes much more than they had done, and were pleased with her kind tact and unselfish conduct which had made the evening so pleasant to all, when the prospect had been for anything else. Horace had such a genuinely sweet nature, naturally, and now his principles had taught him manly self-denial, his kind and thoughtful consideration for others was even more evident than ever before. His brother was extremely fond of him, and admired his fine qualities, and followed his example as much as his impulsive and enthusiastic nature permitted. He was of a different temperament, and although as good a man as his brother, yet he seemed to have greater temptations, as he had more imagination. The minister, of course, was expected to have and really had more patience with the shortcomings and faults of other people than the lawyer.

Seldom have brothers been so united as these were in sympathy and affection, and it grieved Horace to think that he might stand in his brother's way in anything. He was almost ready to relinquish his pretensions to Nelly's favor, when he thought that Hubert had so deep an interest in her, so noble and so self-sacrificing was he. But this was the most severe test of his power to give up his own desires that he had yet experienced. He said to himself: "I must wait and discover if Mrs. Huntington is not so interested in me that she will prefer me as a husband even before my attractive brother. If so, I will have no right to sacrifice her, as well as myself, for Hubert's sake."

CHAPTER V.

WHEN in England, Miss Agnes had met a baronet who was very much pleased with her beauty and manners. He had seen her picture, when exhibited in London, and knowing who the painter was, he had gone over to Paris and visited

Mr. Huntington and made his acquaintance. In speaking of the picture, and expressing his great admiration of it, both of its subject and the unusual skill with which it was delineated, Mr. Huntington, who was pleased with his remarks, having had an introduction to him through a mutual friend, had inquired into his antecedents, and finding that he really was what he represented himself to be, had asked permission of Agnes to present to her the young English baronet. Although he had a title, and quite an extensive estate, he was not favored with much fortune. He had seen a good deal of the world, and was of a suitable age to marry Agnes. He had a very good appearance and gentlemanly manners. He had made it a point to see a good deal of Agnes, and met her as often as he possibly could at the different places of amusement which she frequented with her father and Mrs. Huntington.

He called frequently at the hotel in which the Sommervilles were staying in Paris ; but they were away from the house so much that he had not seen her, except in public. This young man was merely indulging himself in admiration of a pretty, attractive woman, without having any idea of proposing any tie nearer than that of acquaintanceship.

Mrs. Huntington, thinking he was really in love with Agnes, had told her that she did not think he was worthy of her serious attention.

“ You know, my dear friend, that your religious opinions are becoming more and more decided, and if you accepted a man of either different views, or, more likely, one who has no views on serious subjects whatever, you would not have that true enjoyment and sympathy which one ought to have in so close a connection. Even the happiest marriage is not all paradise, and I think you should beware of encouraging this young man. I have so high an opinion of you that, if you don’t meet with a man of right views and high principles to be your partner for life, you had much better remain unmarried. You have so many resources in your mind and in your accomplishments, that you need never fear of not being a happy, comfortable old maid.”

Agnes laughed heartily at this long speech of her friend, and said : “ Oh, Nelly ! if you go on as you have begun you will be equal to Solomon in wisdom. I have no idea of encouraging any designs than mere amusement, and as he means only that, I am equal to him on his own ground.”

“Well, Agnes, I have said my say; perhaps I have been mistaken, but experience makes one more or less suspicious.”

After the return of the baronet to England, some six months after, he heard of the large legacy which Agnes had inherited from her aunt, Miss Marshall. So he soon found that he had to come to America to look after some tracts of land which he wished to purchase to provide for his younger brother who had neither title, lands nor money. Many of the fathers of English younger sons of the nobility have bought up lands in the far West, and stocked them with cattle and sheep; and have turned them into ranches for the benefit of these impecunious youth.

The baronet reached Englewood, on his way to the West, the day after the informal party spoken of, and was invited by the Sommervilles to accompany them to Mrs. Huntington's cottage, to dine and spend the evening. Agnes had written a note to her friend asking permission to bring Sir Philip, which she had granted. Mrs. Huntington did not put into the note which she sent to Agnes her thoughts on the subject, but they were not very complimentary to the Englishman. These thoughts

were that he had just about time to become aware of the fact of the accession of fortune which Agnes had had ; and now that her other charms were set in a gold frame, he would condescend to ask her to share her fortune with him. He considered that his title and his estates and his own agreeable self would more than counterbalance all and every thing, herself included, that she could confer on him. The brothers were introduced to him, and he found, to his surprise, during the evening spent at the cottage, that he was put on his mettle ; so had to exert himself to the utmost to compete with both the men and the women in the party in conversation. Hubert was a most lively and interesting talker, and being a fine orator, he was very fluent, and could distance almost any one in the race if he cared enough to try to do so. But as the baronet's attentions were devoted to Agnes, he allowed him to walk over the track unmolested, as far as he was concerned, except by an occasional witty or humorous remark, which he could not resist from flinging at the swell ; for Sir Philip never forgot that he had a title, and had quite a self-important air about him. Rob had less patience than any of the others ; for the rest had all been in Europe, and were more

accustomed to meeting people of rank, and, seeing how they were bowed down to abroad, were not so surprised and put out by his manner. After a very pleasant dinner, the gentlemen and the Sommervilles drove over to Englewood, where they were invited to remain the night by the hospitable host, Mr. Sommerville; and after a late breakfast, next day, they went out on the lawn all ready for an expedition to some distant hills, from which there were some very fine views.

The day proved auspicious, and cool enough to be bracing; so they were joined by Mrs. Huntington and Rob, whom she had persuaded to give her the morning. After mutual greetings, some of them entered the carriages and the rest mounting their horses, and all being in fine spirits, anticipating a delightful excursion. Agnes was accompanied by a groom, so that, if too fatigued before the end of the day, he might lead her horse and she take a seat in Nelly's coach. Rob was on a very spirited nag, and showed to advantage, being such an excellent horseman; which was rarely ever the case with those who are much on board vessels. But he was an exception to this rule. Mr. Sommerville had requested Hubert to go to his stables, and choose

whatever horse he preferred. He was dearly fond of a fine animal, and as Mr. Sommerville had requested him to select a horse, he had risen very early in the morning and had been in the stables an hour or two before breakfast examining, trying the different horses, and hearing the opinions of the chief hostler on the points and capacities of the fine show animals which were in the stable. Mr. Sommerville, having now his own fortune, chose to invest some of it in the way he loved best, and kept quite a stud. When the animals were led round for the start, Mrs. Huntington and Agnes were surprised that Hubert had chosen so large and powerful a horse. He had to ride off with Rob ahead, as the carriages could not begin to keep up with the rapid gait which these horses maintained, to the pleasure of their riders. The baronet, though secretly wishing to join these two men, as he had done little else but ride to hounds all his life, yet thought it to his best interest to say, that he preferred a seat in Mrs. Huntington's coach, where already was seated Horace.

"I must reserve a place for my friend," said Nelly, "but when she is ready to come with us, if you will take the reins, the coachman can go behind with the footman."

Sir Philip agreed to this arrangement, and proposed carrying it out at once, for he thought it was much better than sitting with the pair and taxing his brain for conversation. Horace was quite disconcerted, for, although he sat inside and the baronet was out on the box, for fear of being overheard, he had no opportunity of conversation of such a nature as to discover Nelly's present state of mind. Her manner was very gracious to him, but he thought he perceived an unusual amount of interest shown in Hubert's movements and skill. She made inquiries about his horsemanship, and seemed quite solicitous for his safety. He thought: "I must have patience, and either wait for another chance or allow time to develop what is in store for me in the future."

After what all pronounced a charming day, as the views fully came up to expectation, they returned home safely; and, after luncheon, the gentlemen took their departure, the Rev. Horace going to his home, and Hubert to the hotel with Sir Philip Durant, where they exchanged ideas; and upon Hubert saying he would, he feared, be compelled to go again to England about an estate he had in charge there, Sir Philip became at once interested

and inquisitive on the subject, asked many questions about the estate and the revenues therefrom—so Hubert concluded to watch this fortune hunter, and protect his client if he found it necessary.

Agnes soon perceiving the intentions of the baronet, concluded to take a trip from home, to avoid his constant presence ; for now he came to Englewood without invitation. But before she left she was compelled to listen to a proposal of marriage from him, and as he went off abruptly, after he had made it, we can draw our own conclusions. At her father's request, she deferred her departure from Englewood for a short time. Mr. Sommerville had noticed the partiality of Agnes for Hubert, and as he thought the minister was paying serious attentions to Nelly, and concluded, from his own approbation and admiration of the Rev. Horace, that Nelly had the same tastes as himself, he thought it would certainly end in a marriage, and a most suitable one, he remarked to himself. He had wished that his daughter and the minister should have made a match ; but as neither of them seemed to share in his wish, he had resigned it with much reluctance.

He had had such comfort in the Reverend, not only in his principles but in his judgment, and he

thought his disposition was so calculated to make a wife and a household happy that he regretted it exceedingly. Knowing that Agnes had a large income to dispose of each year, he thought after his death, which could not be so very far distant, it would require a judicious man to advise and to help her to distribute it where it would be most efficient and be most lasting. However, he thought Hubert would be next best of all the men he knew, and if Agnes preferred him, she should have her wish.

CHAPTER VI.

AS Hubert spoke of returning to Boston, Mr. Sommerville said that he and Agnes would go as far as that city with him, and then proceed immediately to New York. Hubert was pleased with this proposal, for he liked Mr. Sommerville, and was grateful to him for his hospitality and very kind attentions. Having very little vanity, he did not suspect for a moment that Agnes cared for him otherwise than as a friend. In a few days they

were all ready for the start. After a very sorrowful farewell to Mrs. Huntington, for although he made great effort to restrain any indication of his regret, his expressive countenance betrayed him. Fortunately, Horace was not present on that occasion. Mrs. Huntington also showed emotion when saying "good-bye," and was much provoked at herself for her want of resolution.

So the party of three went to Boston, and had the good fortune to meet Ellen Terry and Sir Henry Irving, and see them in some of their finest characters at one of the Boston theatres. They attended lectures, delivered by the first men in the lecture field, heard concerts and frequented the opera house ; and next to the music, Agnes was most pleased with the flower shows, for which Boston is so famous, and in which the people of "The Hub" excel in their arrangement of the superb plants and flowers exhibited. After a fortnight spent in this delightful way, when Agnes and Hubert were together almost constantly, as he yielded to her father's invitations to drive with her, and to accompany them on every occasion, Hubert began to think that as he couldn't get the one he loved most, as his brother was before him in that quarter, that he

might possibly in the future (if Miss Sommerville was as gracious to him then as now), ask her to join him in his life's pilgrimage, as he had now more cause to expect success. But if encouragement had not been extended to him he should not have thought of it, for his mind was still on Nelly.

After Agnes and her father had bade Hubert farewell, they continued their journey to New York. Before Mr. Sommerville had left Boston, he had told Hubert that he thought he had better begin to prepare for a second trip to England. Accordingly, his preparations were under way very soon, and having taken his passage in a steamer, in the course of a week he was on the Atlantic Ocean.

Mrs. Huntington felt quite lost after her friend and Mr. Hubert Egmont and Mr. Sommerville had left the neighborhood. Of course, she and the Reverend Horace were thrown together by circumstances, although there being a great deal of sickness in the neighborhood, among the poorer classes, the minister was much engaged in visiting them. He kept Mrs. Huntington and all her maids busy making and furnishing delicacies for the sick people.

One day at the table Rob said: "Sister, I have something to tell you, which I consider the best

piece of news I have ever imparted to you. I don't know if you will consider it such, but I am about to leave your home, sister."

"That means, Rob, that you intend taking unto yourself a wife, and I am very glad of your happiness."

"Besides this," said Rob, "I want to propose to you to aid me in what is quite an undertaking for me, but of which the responsibility will be very much lessened, if you would join me in its accomplishment."

"Rob, I wonder if I don't guess near the truth, when I think that it is a trip to Europe that you are contemplating?"

"Why, you must be a witch or a mind-reader to name the truth so precisely," enjoined her brother.

"So you wish me to be of the party, Rob? It would be very pleasant on some accounts, but you remember that I have just bought that farm, and expect to build a commodious house upon it for my own place of residence, in order that you may be nicely housed in our cottage."

"O sister dear, that is like yourself; but you could postpone building your house for another six months, and then I know you wish to have us live

with you until the other mansion is completed. So that will break our separation more gradually, and if you prefer that I and Gertrude should take the care of this house off your hands while we are with you, we should both be delighted to do so. You know, dear sister, how poorly I can speak French, and how little I know of the language comparatively. So that not only your pleasant society will be valuable to Gertrude and myself as travelling companion, but exceedingly so as an interpreter."

"Why, Rob, there is scarcely anything in my power that I would refuse you, so if you will give me time, I will arrange my affairs so that they can be left."

Rob was very much delighted, and sat down and wrote to the girl he was engaged to, commencing with "Dear Gertie:—Did any man ever have so good a sister as I have," and then relating all the circumstances which we have just told, wound up by saying: "Hurry up with that everlasting trousseau, so that we can all be ready in less than a month; and, as you have an aunt living in Seaport, my sister wishes you to come up and be married in their little church, near her home, and go immediately from Seaport after the ceremony with her in

company to Boston, where we will take the steamer for our trip across." So endeth the first lesson.

When Agnes and her father returned, she was very much surprised at the sudden determination of her friend, who said to her: "I would try to persuade you to accompany the party, only I don't think it would be best for those we leave behind, for us both to absent ourselves at the same time; particularly, as Rob is to be away for at least six months." So in less time than they had at first supposed, the bride consented to name the day. Rob went for her to her native village, and brought her up to her aunt's house in Seaport. Nelly went immediately to call upon her, taking with her a profusion of flowers, and several handsome and valuable wedding gifts.

The one Gertrude seemed to be most pleased with, was a small oil painting of Nelly herself, painted by her husband, the artist. As Mrs. Huntington had a similar one on a much larger canvas, and one or two others taken at different times painted by her husband, she felt that she could spare to her dear brother and his wife some of Guy's handiwork. The wedding was very pretty; the bride looking very modest and sweet in her simple attire, and

Rob happy and proud. The Reverend Horace performed the ceremony, and presented a very handsome Bible to the married pair. Miss Agnes gave them a breakfast set of silver, and Mr. Sommerville donated to them a handsome carriage, for Rob already possessed an excellent horse. For fear that her brother could not afford to give the minister as fee as much as Nelly wished him to have, she handed Rob a large pocket-book with "The Rev. Horace Egmont" in gilt letters on the outside, and in it was enclosed five one hundred dollar notes. In visiting the poor with Mr. Egmont, she had observed his great liberality towards them, and she feared he deprived himself too much of those things which he really required. Upon opening the pocket-book, after reaching home, as he took one note out after another, he thought Grant must have made a mistake, and he had a mind to write him a note and ask an explanation. But it suddenly flashed over his mind that this was his sister's gift instead of his, so he changed his purpose.

He had begun before this to suspect that Mrs. Huntington was possessed of far more means than he had supposed, and now this confirmed him in his suspicions ; and, when on meeting Mr. Sommerville

he questioned him about it, he found that Nelly was really a wealthy woman. He felt very much discouraged, and when he went down to the station to see the wedding party start, he thought that perhaps he had been presumptuous, and that all chance of success was over for him.

Nelly seemed very sorry to part with Agnes, and told the Reverend that she hoped that he and Agnes would be better friends now than ever. As the minister was about to pursue his way to his own home, Mr. Sommerville laid a hand on his arm and said: "Come, come, my friend. Don't give way to despondency, but get into the carriage with us; and, as it is a lovely day, I will drive you and Agnes for a long round among the hills, and then return to our house for a luncheon, and we shall claim you for the rest of the day to console each other for the loss of our friends."

Agnes missed the companionship of Hubert so much after his departure, she was very glad to talk to his brother, who constantly reminded her of him. Mr. Sommerville, who possessed much information, and who had travelled and had considerable experience of the world, was a most agreeable man, and knew how to introduce subjects of conversation and

expatiating on them, to draw out the sympathies and expressions of his hearers, without being pedantic or tiresome. So by the time they had taken their drive and eaten their luncheon, and Agnes and her father had played the piano and violin, the world did not look quite so black to the two young people who were left behind.

The health of Miss Sommerville had never been very strong, and being of a very sensitive nature, the excitement of parting with her friend, Hubert, and afterwards with Nelly, had upset her very much. On this account her father encouraged the minister to come out and ride with her on horseback, as she really seemed too weak to walk very much. His kind attentions were soothing to her, and his religious sentiments met with her full approbation. So always once during the twenty-four hours, Horace was to be found in her company. She hadn't forgotten Hubert, but next to him, she preferred his brother to all others.

One morning, at the breakfast table, the servant brought in the daily paper, and on the front page was the picture of a large steamer foundering at sea. It proved to be the steamer in which Hubert had sailed. Agnes fainted away, and it was some time

before she could be restored to consciousness. As soon as the Rev. Horace saw the account, he hurried out to see his friends. Agnes had recovered herself somewhat by this time; and, as there had been several boat-loads of the passengers and crew saved, they had still the hope to sustain them, that Hubert would be among those. It was impossible, as yet, to obtain a list of the names of those in the boats, so they had to bear the suspense with the best patience they could for a few days. In this dreadful uncertainty, Horace was the greatest comfort to Agnes, because they sympathized so completely, being so in accord in their affection for Hubert.

The steamer in which Mrs. Huntington and her brother and his wife took passage, was a much swifter sailer than the ship in which Hubert was, so, though several days behind in starting, she overtook the boats which had been rowing towards her, and they were relieved of their contents by the steamer. As Nelly, Rob, and his wife were standing near the gangway, looking at the people coming aboard from the boats, and a small schooner which had rescued them from the boats, they heard a shout and a ringing laugh, and looking up saw Hubert

entering the ship. They were all perfectly delighted to meet again. Joy lit up his expressive face as he clasped Nelly's hand, and she was surprised at his manner, which was so much less restrained than it had been when she was at home.

Rob liked the talk of the bright agreeable young man, and, of course, he attached himself to their party. "How lucky, sister, we are to have this addition; as you would not stay with Gertrude and myself, as much as we wished you to, I suppose out of consideration for us. So now you have a friend who can entertain you much better than we could, and as well as any one I know. Then he is, as you know, the brother of your dear friend, the Rev. Mr. Egmont. Nelly, I felt sorry for him that you had to leave him; but, I shall only have you for six months longer, and he will, perhaps, for life."

"O nonsense, Rob; don't go too fast, my dear. I think your having a wife, has somewhat turned your head."

So Hubert devoted himself to the widow. He had been restrained by a sense of honor before, but now, he considered, as they had been thrown together in this remarkable and mysterious manner,

as he fully believed by Providence, he did not try to conceal his feelings any longer. He thought, perhaps, that Nelly's affections had been enlisted too fully by his brother, but the temptation was greater than he or most any other man could have withstood.

CHAPTER VII.

SHE was surprised at the large fund of information which he possessed, and so delightfully imparted with graceful, animated gesture and manner; and in it all so perceptible, the high motives swaying his mind, the depth of his feeling for humanity at large, the broad views he had of life, and, above all, she began to perceive his great devotion to herself. He restrained his ardor and refrained from confidence, but love spoke out of his eloquent face by his very expression, more clearly than words could utter.

Nelly began to seek Rob and Gertrude, and even stay in her cabin a good deal; but she felt his fascination, and she began to think of Horace with

sadness. Hubert knew that his brother was not capable of such deep emotion; that he had been pleased before by a woman, and had entirely recovered any disappointment which might have befallen him. In fact, he did not think that the feeling that Horace had for the widow, equalled his at all; that he did not care for this beautiful and attractive creature, half as much as he did. Nelly now seemed so much engaged, and although the weather was fine, was absent so much from the deck, that Hubert began to suspect that he was the cause of it, and as he did not want to deprive her of the exercise and fresh air, he began to feel despondent, and remained indoors himself—so much so, that at last he took to his berth, and could sleep none, and at length refused to eat.

Rob, missing him for a couple of days, went to hunt him up, and found him in a fever. He had passed through so much excitement in the shipwreck, and the repulse which Nelly's manner had given him, had been too much for his equanimity. Grant went for the doctor, who said that Mr. Egmont was very much prostrated, and the steward had said that he hadn't eaten anything for several days. The doctor administered a sedative, and told

Rob he had better take charge of him, and that he must have the most concentrated and nourishing foods, or else he would certainly die. "The symptoms indicate," said the doctor, "that his trouble is more mental than physical. Find out what is the matter with him, my dear sir, for we must minister to the mind diseased."

So Rob, listening, while in the delirium of fever, discovered Hubert's secret. He told Nelly that he was literally starving himself to death. "Why, Nelly, he can't sleep, and refuses to eat. So I think, if you would come and persuade him to take something, he would do so."

"Oh, Rob, do you think it is my duty to go? Because, if so, I certainly will."

"Yes," replied Rob. "If we can help a fellow mortal, should we ever refuse?"

Rob then went and told the sick man that his sister had asked if he would see her. He sprang up in the bed, and said: "Wash my face and brush my hair." It was the first interest he had shown in anything since he had given up to be sick. He even went so far as to have his night-robe changed, and he said: "Rob, do you think she will be frightened at me?"

“Well, you look pretty gaunt, and, if you don’t eat something, and try and get better looking, I don’t think she will stay with you very long.”

Rob went off, and soon returned, bringing his sister; and, at the sight of her, his whole face flushed painfully, and Rob felt anxious for fear his feverishness would return, so great was his excitement. Nelly sat down beside him, in a quiet, soft voice asked him a few questions, and, laying her hand on his, she brought the most happy look into his poor face. She said: “Won’t you let me give you some refreshment, my dear Mr. Egmont?”

“Oh, yes, Nelly; I will take anything you offer me, and obey all your behests.”

After this Nelly and her brother were with him alternately, and, with their careful nursing and encouraging words, they induced him to venture upon deck, as soon as he was able to stand. Two strong seamen carried him up in the morning, and he kept in a reclining chair all day, and either Rob Grant or his wife, or Mrs. Huntington, were beside his chair constantly. He did not improve as fast as they had hoped at first, until one day Nelly, seeing him very much depressed, put her hand on his and called him “Dear Hubert.” He clasped

her hand, and poured out his affection in most eloquent words, and Nelly did not repulse him. He would not be satisfied until she had admitted that it was only the idea of her having allowed his brother's devotion, and feared it might not be strictly honorable to him, that she had not accepted his attentions more generally on board the steamer at first. So Nelly was rather forced—but, I must admit, not against her inclination—to accept the offer of marriage which Hubert made her. She very soon forgot everything but the delight of the fact that she had won the heart of not only the brightest, intellectually, of any man she had ever known, but that he was one of those men who were actuated by the best motives. She felt now that she had met all the requirements which she wished in a life companion. He spoke of work, but he was to perform it; she was not asked to assist him. She was only to encourage him, and make his home and him happy by her consideration and care.

People may blame them, but it seemed inevitable, and, under the circumstances, it is not to be wondered at. “Poor, dear Horace,” said Hubert to himself; “he will love her almost as much, as my wife, as if she were his own.” So they reached

the end of their journey without any more incidents, and Rob, though surprised, thought that his sister must know what suited her better than anyone else did, and, though he felt very sorry for Horace, he really thought Hubert was a more fitting husband for his sister of the two men. They landed at Liverpool, and went immediately to London, where they spent a week in seeing the sights, intending to return later and finish them up. Then, from there to Scotland, visiting Edinburgh, and the beautiful Highlands and lakes. In their route they met several people, who were travelling in a party.

Among these were the families of two English artists whom Mrs. Huntington had known in Paris. They were pleasant people, and were delighted to meet her once more, and asked, as a favor, that they might join them. Mr. Jerome, an artist of some distinction, was the father of one of the families. He was a pleasant, intelligent man, and Hubert, with his assistance, kept up a most animated conversation whenever they were so situated that they could listen, without too much effort. Hubert generally took the lead, as he was much more wide-awake than most people. He had great

powers of observation and a remarkable memory, and, as he was fond of talking, he communicated the fruits of his observation in an entertaining manner.

After seeing that most interesting city of Edinburgh to great advantage, as it happened—which was a very rare thing—that it didn't rain a single day all the time they were there. So the different points of interest were visited in a more agreeable manner than was usual in that far-famed city. The castle and palace of Holyrood are so well known to all readers, and those who have crossed the water and visited that most picturesque country, that I refrain from a description of either.

Mr. Egmont began to remember that he came out to Europe to attend to the estate of which he was agent. So, mentioning it to Mrs. Huntington, she urged him to hasten back to England, and to attend to his law duties, before he indulged her with any more sight-seeing. Grant and his wife remained over a few days longer, to visit the romantic lakes, which are so very attractive to all lovers of Scott and Wordsworth. Rob said to his sister: "How unfortunate, Nelly, that you can't go with us to the lakes. You will certainly miss the most charming part of the Scotch tour."

“Well, I think that part of it will make a delightful resort after our marriage. Indeed, it would be a pleasant wedding trip.”

Egmont and the widow, accompanied by a Scotch lassie who had taken a fancy to Mrs. Huntington at the hotel, and had asked her to take her as her maid, as she wished to go to America, and was accomplished as a lady's maid (and, if Mrs. Huntington would allow her, she would take some lessons in hair-dressing, in London, to perfect herself in that art). As Nelly had not brought a maid with her, and had first-class recommendation of this girl, she consented to the arrangement. So Effie White took service at once, and accompanied her mistress and Hubert to England. The lawyers in the nearest large town to Miss Marshall's estate had been consulted by Hubert, on his first visit to England, in regard to some points of English law, relative to landed property. He so soon acquired all the information they could give him, that they were struck with his cleverness. So, on calling, during this visit, to the town where they were, they welcomed him with more than cordiality. After a conversation, they made him an offer, to take him into their business firm, if he would bring with

him the agency of the estate in question. Hubert did not ask for time to consider, because nothing could tempt him—so patriotic was he—to forsake his own native land. He did not fancy, either, the class distinctions, which are so marked in England, and he declined the honor promptly.

Upon returning to the hotel, he mentioned the incident to Mrs. Huntington, and remarked, at the same time, that he was afraid the hinges of his neck were too stiff to bow down to nobility, or even to royalty; that, to his American mind, the subserviency of the people in Europe was almost revolting. He believed, with Burns, that “a man’s a man for a’ that,” if he is only nature’s nobleman.

From Carlisle they went to London, and, after spending a few days, and enjoying the opera and some of the other amusements, and hearing, at Westminster Abbey, a magnificent sermon by Bishop Brookes, of Boston, in a few days after, wended their way to Brighton. Nelly had received from Mr. Stone, the sculptor, a note, enquiring how long she would be in London, to which she did not reply until after they reached Brighton. She then wrote to Mr. Stone, telling him where they were, having been joined by her brother and

sister-in-law in the meantime. They met many agreeable people at Brighton, and some former acquaintances of Mrs. Huntington's, and one or two who were really friends. Nelly wrote Mr. Stone that they would be in Brighton several weeks, as he had in his note proposed joining them, wherever they were.

One day Nelly, Hubert, and a couple of his acquaintances, went on a driving party. They drove along the beach for a long distance, and, arriving at a very nice inn, they proposed to each other to alight and have a luncheon. Mr. Stone, having arrived at Brighton immediately after their departure, followed them swiftly in a vehicle, urging the driver, by bribing him liberally, to make all haste possible. He did not overtake them, however, until they were seated in the balcony of the inn. When he arrived, he was very much surprised to see how much more beautiful Mrs. Huntington was than when he had last met her. She had always had, during his acquaintance with her heretofore, a very sad, pensive expression. But now she looked in splendid health, and happiness irradiated her lovely face. After the ceremony of introduction had been passed through, they sat at

the table, in a beautiful arbor nearby, covered with fragrant flowers and quantities of sweet peas, which were in full bloom, of every shade and hue. Mr. Egmont had just gathered a bunch of these flowers, and Nelly was pinning them in her corsage when the sculptor approached her on his first arrival. Mr. Stone had always been accustomed to taking the lead in whatever society he chanced to be. But to-day he found he had a powerful competitor in Hubert, who seemed as fully versed on every subject as himself, and, being a much younger man, and of a much more attractive appearance, the sculptor was thrown more in the shade than he relished.

When they went on to the piazza, he asked Mrs. Huntington to take a walk with him. She turned and said to her friend: "Laura, I hope you and Mr. Egmont will accompany us." This chagrined Mr. Stone, but he concealed it entirely, as he was a man of the world, and had learned to have the utmost self-control. They sauntered down towards the beach, and, as there was a quiet bay, and a little steam yacht in it, he proposed that they should take a short sail, which they did, and enjoyed very much. But Mr. Stone was very

much disappointed, because Nelly gave him no opportunity of saying a private word in her ear. On returning, she invited Mr. Stone to enter the carriage with her and her friend, if Mr. Egmont would be so good as to take the trouble of assuming the reins, and driving a pair of horses who, she was afraid, would require urging. But Hubert, being in a particularly good humor, said he would with pleasure.

So Nelly's friend, who was a bright, pretty girl, sat in front with him ; but, as Hubert kept his ears open, Mr. Stone did not venture anything, but in a general way. He saw he had a rival in Egmont, but, having been spoiled by a good deal of admiration, he didn't doubt for a moment that he could distance him in the race without any effort. They reached Brighton, and saw the magnificent sunset over the water, which called out all the poetry they knew, and each one commenced quoting. Here Hubert was again superior to his rival, as Mr. Stone had a poor memory, and did not care for poetry. Nelly had become very fond of fine compositions, and enjoyed Hubert's exquisite selections.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. STONE requested a private interview of Mrs. Huntington, and asked her to meet him on the verandah, after dinner. She could not well refuse, although she feared that he might embarrass her by some professions of regard, as she was aware of his admiration, even while her husband lived. But, to her great relief, it proved to be a matter of business. He told her he wished to ask a great favor of her: that he wanted her to allow him to make a statue, resembling her—not that he ever expected to place all her charms in marble, but he would do his best. He said: “My dear madam, I will present you with the statue, when finished, and you surely will allow me to duplicate it, for my own gratification, and also to have a second copy, as a matter of profit, which I know I could sell at a very high price.”

“Why, this is a very generous, noble offer, Mr. Stone,” said Nelly. And, so delighted was the sculptor with her manner, although she had not promised him to give him sittings, he was just on the point of throwing himself at her feet, and ask-

ing her to bless his life, by becoming his wife, when a remark from Nelly made him pause. She said: "Mr. Stone, I shall have to ask the permission of Mr. Egmont. I do not know whether he will object or not."

"Great heavens!" cried he, "what has he to do with your acquiescence with my request?"

"Why, Mr. Stone, I must tell you, between ourselves, that Mr. Egmont and I are to be married in a fortnight, here in Brighton, and I hope you will remain and attend the wedding."

The sculptor was dumbfounded. He had never received such a shock in his life. That any woman, even as beautiful as Nelly, should decline his offer, which he thought an honor to anyone, almost surpassed belief. "I am most profoundly indebted to you, madam, for your kind invitation, but I shall be compelled to leave Brighton to-morrow. My intention was to remain a short time only, as I have numerous engagements on the other side of the Channel." So, after a very formal farewell, he vanished, showing much chagrin in his countenance, usually so well guarded.

The wedding day having arrived, quite a numerous company assembled in the parlor of the hotel,

and many of them accompanied the bridal party, to the principal church in Brighton, to see the marriage ceremony of one of the most brilliant women of the day, in beauty and attractions, and that of a man distinguished for talent and success in life. Nelly was attired in a silver grey brocade, with superb ornaments, and a veil, which was the gift of her friend Agnes, which reached down to the end of her long train. Two little girls strewed roses up the aisle, in advance of the bride, who was on her brother's arm. Her jewels, as well as her looks, were the admiration and the talk of all who beheld them. The necklace of pearls, with a diamond pendant, was the gift of her artist friends, united. The pearl bracelets, with diamond clasps, were sent by the sculptor, which was rather magnanimous in him. The small diamond tiara was the gift of the groom, and Mr. Sommerville had sent Rob a check for \$1,000, to invest in whatever Nelly preferred. There were a great many people present, who were handsomely dressed, and, as the day was bright, all went "merry as a marriage bell."

Hubert wished this wedding to be in this style, as he thought his queenly wife should have nuptials

worthy of her. What a contrast it was to the first simple wedding, when Nelly was but a country maiden ! But the same sterling qualities of heart remained, though the mind had acquired information and mental qualities of inestimable value.

When Mr. Stone was at Brighton, he had begged Nelly to come to Paris, when she was ready to have her statue begun ; but she had told him that she never could visit that city again—its associations were too painful. But he could appoint any other place in France, that would be a pleasant residence, and she would join him a fortnight after her marriage.

Among the elegant gifts she received, was a very fine dressing-case, with gold and malachite fittings, which Rob and Gertrude had delighted themselves in presenting her. She kissed Gertrude, when she left her, and her brother, and said some gracious things to her ; but, with the kiss she bestowed on Rob, she gave him a pinch, and told him he was an extravagant boy—that such a dressing-case was fit for a countess, for Nelly still loved simplicity, and, like the little bird in the story, did not care to be too fine.

When Nelly had consulted Mr. Egmont, before her marriage, about the statue, they had been walk-

ing in the suburbs of Brighton. She proposed taking a seat, and opened the subject to him. "I have something to tell you, about which I want your views, and also to consult you in regard to it. Now, promise me to speak sincerely, and give me your own opinion, and not think what I would wish. To tell the truth, I do not yet know what I do wish, and would be guided almost entirely by your express desire."

"Well, Nelly, what can it be, that requires so long a preamble?"

"Nothing less, Mr. Egmont, than that Mr. Stone wishes to make an image of me in marble."

"Why should he not, my beautiful girl? Your form should be copied, and placed in a distinguished position. Of course accede, if the demand the artist makes is not exorbitant."

"On the contrary, his offer is most generous, for, if he is permitted to duplicate it, he makes me a gift of the first one."

"What a fortunate man am I, to have his beloved carved in enduring marble, by one of, if not the first, sculptor now living. Why, Nelly, you will be the envy of all the women in France and America."

How very much was Nelly struck with the different way in which this man of noble nature took the similar proposal to that which had been made to Guy Huntington! This one rejoiced in her preëminence, whilst Guy only thought of it as how it would affect him. Nelly said: "You know, Hubert, after I am your wife, you can always be with me when I am posing, which will make it so much more agreeable and comfortable for me. However, it may be to you not so much so."

When left to herself at last, Nelly could not help thinking of her first marriage with the lover of her less thoughtful and more youthful years. He was also a man very attractive, on a natural plan; but her present husband was of higher principles, broader intellect, and deeper feeling. He had also inspiration of a better sort than the painter had, for his was for fame to himself, but this one's was for the betterment of all humanity. The expression of the faces of the two men were so different.

Among the wedding presents was a gold heart from Horace, attached to a ribbon, enclosed in a beautiful white pearl prayer-book, for which it was intended as marker.

Whilst all this joy and happiness are taking the attention of our friends in Europe, we must ask,

how are the pair of deserted friends passing their time in their once—to them—happy neighborhood? Agnes at first was literally bewildered. When Hubert started to Europe, Nelly had not spoken of her intention of going there, and, when Agnes heard that they would follow him, she began to feel a little solicitude on the subject, but had no idea of such rapid and melancholy termination to her hopes and expectations. She had seen so much of Hubert whilst in Boston, and had hoped that she had not only consoled him, but even effaced the image of her rival. It required all of her newly-acquired religious feelings, as well as the recollection of her lifelong affection for her friend, to feel just the same towards her. At first it was almost impossible.

Horace had but known only partially of her preference for his brother. Now he saw her health giving away, and realized what it was that distressed her. With his natural kindness, he began to try to divert the poor girl, by taking her to walk and talking of cheerful things—making a great effort, as he felt anything but cheerful himself. The walks became shorter every day, and at last her father proposed that she should ride; but

she really was not strong enough, though Horace offered to take charge of the horse. Mr. Sommerville felt grateful to Horace for his kindness, and advised him, as he was looking badly himself, to mount the pick of his stables, and take horseback exercise. This did benefit Horace, and either morning or afternoon he would drive Agnes, and either very early in the morning or late in the evening he would take a ride.

He was always pressed to remain either to luncheon or to dinner. Mr. Sommerville exerted himself, and did everything in his power to interest Agnes in the young minister. He knew that she had become very much attached to Hubert, and she had never quite recovered from the fainting spell which she had had when she thought he was lost. But, as Nelly had liked Horace, after she became interested in Hubert, because he reminded her of his brother, so now poor little Agnes was undergoing the same experience.

In his generous intention of comforting her for her great loss—for he still thought his brother the one man in the world—he found that, with his great desire to bow to the Will of his Master in every sense of the word, and also in his lifelong

affection for his brother, that he was becoming more composed and more reconciled ; that the help he was giving to his little friend was being returned by her, with interest. They could not resist very long the sweet temper on one side, and the gentle manliness on the other ; so Agnes began to be more cheerful, to her father's great delight, and was assuming once more the hues of health. Mr. Sommerville, upon reflection, and seeing that his daughter was being comforted, thought that her large fortune would be even better appropriated, and she would be better advised how judiciously to expend it, by the minister than by the lawyer, for this had been his wish at first. The young couple were unconsciously drifting into a state where they felt perfectly satisfied with each other, and wished no change.

It must not be forgotten that Nelly had sent over from England a young man, who was an architect, who wished to come over to America and to be able to find some buildings to plan and supervise. Her husband had met him accidentally, before his marriage, and they had concluded to intrust him with the building of their future home on the farm, only a few miles from Nelly's cottage.

She had chosen it partly on account of its view, and partly because she wanted to be near her brother and her friend. She had intended to build a house before she had expected to marry again. Mrs. Egmont showed her good, practical sense, after consultation with her husband, in the plan she had adopted and the instructions she had given the architect in regard to her dwelling. It was to be of a tasteful, but rather plain exterior; but the interior was to be as beautiful as was consistent with the size and the pretensions of the house. There was a niche built into one of the walls of the parlor for the reception of her statue, which would not be completed until many months after. When the year was over, Mr. and Mrs. Egmont returned, to find their very comfortable, capacious and interiorly beautiful dwelling all ready for them. Mr. Sommerville and Agnes had superintended the arrangement of the furniture, which she had retained from the old home, and which had been so tastefully repaired and polished as to really look better than new.

She had given her share of the old house to Rob, and also the rest of the furniture, which had partially belonged to her. As he already owned

one-half the place, she made him a gift of the other half. She had sent over from England and France some very beautiful specimens of tables, chairs, bookcases, etc., and brass bedsteads, so that they began to feel at home in a few days. They had been received by Miss Sommerville and her father, for Agnes felt she could stand, with equanimity, meeting Hubert and Nelly. As Hubert was totally unconscious of the preference with which Agnes had regarded him, he felt no embarrassment whatever at meeting her.

She had been informed of Nelly's engagement by a letter from Nelly herself, soon after it was first contracted, with the injunction not to communicate it to a living soul—not even her father or Horace. So Agnes had not felt at liberty to speak of it; but Horace had received a letter from Rob, who, not realizing the extent of his feeling for Nelly, had told him of the whole affair, showing how Hubert had nearly died, and that Nelly was compelled, in a measure, to go to his rescue, and, as they had all thought, she had saved his life; she was of that disposition that could not give by halves, so she accepted his life as her own, and gave her faith and fortune to him. Rob said that it was a repetition

of what had occurred when Nelly saved the life of Guy Huntington. "So you see, my dear friend," said Rob, "that you will have my dear sister for your sister, and I must congratulate you."

At the time Horace received this letter his wounded feelings were very sore, and he felt as though Rob were cauterizing him, similar to the process in the case of a poisonous bite, which the wound resembled in pain and suffering; but this excellent man, in his superiority of character which consisted somewhat of his true humility, patience, and submission to the Supreme Will, turned his attention to comforting one, who was as sorely smitten as he. He had his reward, for his self-abnegation, in seeing Agnes becoming cheerful and bright again, and looking to him for pleasure and happiness. Providence so often ordains our fortunes differently from what we wish at first, but proving that a superior wisdom rules the affairs of men, and "shapes our ends, rough-hew them as we will."

Hubert felt somewhat abashed at meeting his brother, but when he saw his face so full of true affection for him, and respectful regard for his wife, he said to himself: "My brother is a saint without

doubt. His power of self-sacrifice is beyond belief." Nelly blushed on meeting him, and held out both hands which Horace clasped in his, and stooping once more gave her a caress, which she thought she would always remember, so full of sweet forgiveness and true brotherly affection, she felt it to be. She said to herself: "This goodness is certainly above my comprehension." They all met on the first evening, after their return, in Rob's pleasant home, where a little baby called "Nelly" had come to them, and being only a few weeks old Gertrude could not yet leave it, so Rob suggested they should all meet there instead of at either of the other houses.

After they had all settled down, and Mr. Hubert Egmont had been to Boston, to make arrangements to close up his law practice (as he intended in the future to devote his life to writing books, and even poems, perhaps), he was charmed to give up his city residence, and live altogether in the country. Nelly much preferred the country also, but, of course, they intended to travel in the States, to see the wonders of their own great land, as well as of those abroad. They neither of them had yet been to Niagara, and they anticipated doing so shortly.

When Hubert inquired of Nelly if she had any desire to go very soon, she replied: "I must not be too indulgent to myself, and run off and leave Agnes and your brother to do the part of the church work in the neighborhood which rightfully belongs to you and to me." So the duties towards the church, including the choir, assisting Agnes to supervise the affairs of the free hospital, and the giving of little concerts, for the amusement and benefit of the young people about them, took her attention.

CHAPTER IX.

TIME wended away, and Horace and Agnes did not seem either to draw nearer, nor to drift apart. Mr. Sommerville wondered, and at last Hubert said: "Horace, what is the impediment between you and Agnes? You both seem happy when together, and she unhappy when not with you. Why don't you ask her, her wishes and views on the subject?"

"Now, Hubert, you do not suppose that I have the audacity to ask her in marriage, when I only

have enough fortune for myself. My dear boy, she is the possessor of large wealth."

"On that account," said Hubert, "as it is so large, she can share it with you."

"But I am not intending to ask her to share with me. I can support myself; but if children were sent, they would be mine as well as hers, and a father ought to be able to support his own children. No man has a right to marry without he can at least do that. Now Agnes would wish the children to have all the indulgences possible, and my children could not have them. They would be the children of a man in very moderate circumstances."

"O Horace!" exclaimed his brother, "you make me laugh at your high-strung metaphysics. When you marry, her fortune will be partly yours."

"No, never! I shall make over all right to any woman's money before marriage, be it ever so large, or ever so small a sum."

"Well, you intend to let that sweet little Agnes pine in solitude, for she never will give her heart or life to any one else, my dear brother; and this cruelty will just be on account of your unfortunate pride of independence. Yes, it is nothing but pride,

which is as insidious as the source of it is, namely, Satan himself. What is fortune compared to talent, good temper and habits, determination, forbearance, charity, and all the other Christian virtues? Do you suppose that Agnes would for one moment prefer you to possess wealth, instead of all these things?"

"But she possesses all these, and wealth besides, and it is too unequal and asking too much of her, to make the sacrifice of accepting me as a husband without a fortune."

"Well, Horace, either your affection is small, and your perception even less, if you do not see that you are the world to her. You are worse than quixotic, and I shall advise Agnes to take a long journey, and, perhaps, she will meet some knight-errant of a different type from the poor old don."

When the minister went the next day to ask Agnes to drive with him, to his surprise she declined, and said she was about to ride her horse, with her father, to Buxton, to make some arrangements to leave home for a time, as she thought a trip would brighten both her and her father considerably. "You know, Mr. Egmont, that travel gives one new experiences and ideas. Do you not

think it is growing a little monotonous and tame, with the same pursuits and amusements each day, here?"

"Oh, I suppose it is, to a woman who is fond of adventure and excitement," said he, "but as I live in the ideal almost always, except when obliged to put the ideals in practice, I am never weary. I like the quiet, and the time to think and to read, which this country life yields."

"Why, you must be a poet," returned she, "but I hope you will miss me, when I am gone, at any rate."

"I certainly shall, and hope you will not remain away as long as you have just threatened to do. Will you allow me to accompany you to Buxton, as I wish for a ride, as you will not drive with me?"

"Certainly," rejoined Agnes, "I cannot possibly object to that."

Horace was somewhat piqued by her manner, but this was the treatment which he needed just at this time.

Mr. and Mrs. Hubert, having had some talk with Agnes, had advised her to leave home, to wake the dreamer up to the fact that he did consider her indispensable to his happiness really, but he was

not willing to admit it. So he would have to learn to put his pride—or as he called it, self-respect,—behind him. The Egmonts told Agnes and her father, that they would follow them, shortly. They had concluded to take a trip to California, and as the Sommervilles could leave at once, they started off in a day or two to rest at one of the larger cities on the way to Colorado, where they intended stopping over to see the wonders of that most interesting country, including the mountains, the giant trees, the grand cañons, and all the curiosities contained in the far western country.

When Horace learned that his brother and sister Nelly were to follow the Sommervilles, he suddenly woke up enough to think it would be a good chance, and rather nice, to see these wonders in such good company, and he would go as far as Colorado with them, as he could take his vacation during what months he chose. So, without speaking of his intention, on the morning the rest were to leave, they found a trunk marked "Horace Egmont," on the platform awaiting the arrival of the train. A very short time before the train was due, the Reverend Horace made his appearance, looking a little conscious and embarrassed. Although Hubert

felt very much tempted to rally him on the subject, he refrained, as he thought that as he had deprived him of one woman, he would do his best to help him to another. Horace was evidently afraid of his teasing, after all that had passed between them, and felt grateful to him for his consideration. "I thought it a good chance to see what you are to see, and in good company." Hubert glanced at Nelly, and she looked at the hitherto unconscious student, but who was now becoming more alert to passing events, for which they were very glad, as they feared his becoming more and more absent-minded each year of his life.

When the married pair were alone together, Nelly said: "We must endeavor to make him give a natural vent to his very kind and deeply affectionate feelings, and take to himself this dear girl, who will make him as happy as a dreamer can be when out of his visions, and make her supremely so." They were really quite nonplussed to know what step to take next, as Agnes was beginning to be less complaisant and receptive in her manner. She would make little remarks which would cause the minister to open wide his handsome eyes, and gaze at her as though she were

somebody else. He seemed interested in this new phase of her character, but it did not seem to occur to him that he was the cause of it. So a providential accident came to the assistance of the schemers.

There was a collision on the road, at a place where Agnes and her father had gone the day previously, as Mr. Sommerville wished to see a little more of the country on either side of the road; and, as the rest of the party did not wish to accompany them, they remained over a day or two at the little town they had reached. Hubert contrived to make it appear that Agnes was severely wounded, and, when Horace was told of it, he could no longer conceal his feelings for her, and showed great emotion and great haste to reach the spot of the accident.

Upon leaving their train, Nelly was almost sorry to see that Agnes was well enough to be helping others. She had been hurt, but not enough to disable her, although many girls, under the circumstances, would have thought only of themselves; but, as she belonged to the Helping-Hand Club, her motto was to aid others in need whenever she possibly could. Hubert cried out: "Horace,

go in and help her to wait on those poor sufferers. Nelly and I are going on to the next car."

When Agnes came to the door of the car, Horace was so relieved to find she was not seriously injured, that he just took her up in his arms, and carried her away under the trees; and there, giving way to his feelings, he shed tears of joy. He had been using so much self-restraint, and his affection had been so repelled by his pride, that now he just gave way all at once, as his love had gotten the better of his pride. He told Agnes that he had been perfectly wretched, and he wished and hoped that she would be so good as to promise at once that she would take him for better or for worse.

Now that he had begun, Agnes thought he was in entirely too much of a hurry, and wished to moderate his ardor; but she found it impossible, and had to promise not only to take him, but to take him very soon—even before their journey was concluded. He declared the very thing to make a pleasant wedding journey would be to proceed to California. "If they will allow me to arrange the party, I will induce my brother and his wife, and your father, to return to Englewood and its neighborhood, to take charge of things there, and get a

substitute for me in my pulpit for several months ; and, after we go back, they can take their trip to California when it suits them."

"You are a very good organizer," said Agnes, laughingly ; "but do you think that all the others will be as pleased with the arrangement as you and I are? I think my father would consent readily, as he would be decidedly *de trop* with us on this occasion ; and I think he might, with the assistance of a substitute in your place, manage for a couple of months or so, without depriving Nelly and Hubert of their intended trip. This part of the journey, although it has been rather interesting to them, and uncommonly so to us, may not satisfy them, and they may wish to go farther."

Horace had still a little natural selfishness about him—as who has not?—and wished to have the attention of his sweet little wife undivided ; but Agnes, in her superior wisdom, knew that a friend on such a long journey would be a pleasant change to each of them. Though about the same age as Horace, she had quicker perception, more observation, and had seen more of the world and life. Her sojourn in Europe had taught her a great deal. All her actions now were dictated not only by

womanly wisdom, but that which she had gained in the world, which is called common sense, and which is much rarer than one might suppose.

Mr. Sommerville was consulted, and entered into the views of Agnes with the kindest interest. He said, "Certainly he would have to return, and he and some other minister, assisted by Rob and his wife, could manage everything." This devoted father was so gratified and pleased, that his dear little daughter should at last find so good a protector and so fine a man as her husband. He had felt rather solicitous at the idea of his dying, and leaving her comparatively alone in the world, with no near relative on either side of the water; and, although he knew that the Egmonts and Rob and his wife would always be fast and firm friends, yet he wished her to marry, and have objects for her pure and bright affections to centre upon especially.

But he said: "Why, Agnes! no wedding, no trousseau, no cake, no festivities for all your friends? Is this the way that my only child, and the popular Miss Sommerville, mistress of a large fortune and estates in England, should give herself away on the road—as one may say, without any preparation whatever?"

“Oh, my dear father, my wardrobe is always sufficient for all contingencies, or whatever may happen. I can send for all I need, and have my maid to come out and travel with me. Horace and I both agree in disliking all parade, and really prefer this simple and quiet way of being united to each other. We can, on our return home, if suitable, and we wish it, give our friends and the neighborhood all the festive enjoyment which they could expect. I know such great happiness will follow our union, that I should hope to have my friends enjoy some of it with us. Mr. Horace Egmont is a man who is full of charity and good will for all, and I shall try to follow in his footsteps.”

“My dear child, I think you will walk abreast with him there, for very few could show more love to God and charity to the neighbor.”

Agnes was very much touched by her father's unselfish goodness. Few men would have relinquished their claim on her affections as did Mr. Sommerville. So Agnes said: “Dear papa, I am not surprised at the way in which you treat your little daughter, and it only serves to make my love more devoted to you than ever; and you shall gain

a son, and not lose your daughter, for, as long as we live, I shall claim you as an inmate of the house in which we dwell."

So, when they reached a large town, they remained to rest over a day or two after all this excitement, and then proceeded to Colorado, where they visited the wonders of the world; and, in a town in Colorado, they were married in a small church, simply and quietly. Beside the party who accompanied her, were two or three travellers, with whom they had become acquainted, whom they asked to witness the ceremony; and these were all that were present at our minister's wedding. It was all conducted just as he wished it to be, thereby avoiding publicity and etiquette, which was always wearisome to him.

So the heiress was married off as any village maiden might have been, and it was entirely to her own satisfaction, for, like all good women who really love, their own pleasure is secondary to others, and, if only the lords of creation are contented, they generally are, and if not, try to be so at least. "I suppose this is the best way," said Nelly, "to satisfy our liege lords, and make them think, at any rate, that we are happy, if they are."

Nelly could joke now about matrimony, for the man whom she had married appreciated her and her affection fully, and continued his great devotion to her without any cessation, and she felt secure in Hubert's good sense, as well as in his constancy.

So they continued their trip to California, where Nelly and her husband remained over a month, leaving the newly-married couple to remain several weeks longer, they having met some very pleasant people of leisure and cultivation, who were traveling through this delightful and most beautiful State, and expected to remain some time. They had invited the Egmonts to join them, and Horace and Agnes had accepted with very much pleasure.

When Hubert and Nelly returned to their home, a dear little girl was sent to her. It was a very healthy, beautiful child, and Nelly's cup of happiness was now running over. Hubert was not as devoted to children as she was, except in the abstract. He never had been accustomed to them, and thought, at first, that Nelly's time and attention might be too much absorbed to give him as much of them as he had been accustomed to, for she had a way of spoiling everyone whom she loved by her great attention to them. So Mr. Hubert

had a good lesson now before him to learn, which is generally found very salutary.

But Nelly was not devoid of true wisdom, so she did not indulge herself, as much as she would have liked to, in holding her darling baby in her arms. She knew that, while it was so young, yet it would know no difference between a nurse of gentle ways and its own mother. So she refrained from making an idol of it at once. She knew, as it grew older, and began to recognize and respond, that its father would feel as much interest and affection for it as she did herself. So this sweet-tempered, good-hearted woman, brave through unselfishness, steered her little bark of life through the breakers and the rocks of matrimony safely and gracefully, which, by other conduct, she, like many others, might have foundered her boat among the rocks and shoals. She had wished for a child during her first marriage, but only now her wish was granted and her happiness complete.

To return to the bride and the minister. The Reverend Horace and his wife, after a most delightful tour, and great improvement in the health of both, at last reached home safely, very anxious to see Nelly's little baby, for the whole family were

perfectly delighted at her having received what she had always craved so much. Her brother Rob was very hilarious on the occasion, and claimed the right to be godfather. "Sister mine, what do you intend to call this wonderful youngster? I have always thought, if I ever had a daughter, I should like to give her the name of my grandmother, who, they say, I closely resemble. Her name was Ethel, and, as the baby's father prefers the name of Linda, I shall join the names, and she shall be called Ethelinda, which sounds very well with Egmont."

Agnes had rather expected that the child would be named for her, but Nelly and Hubert both preferred family names. When Nelly mentioned the subject to him, as she feared Agnes felt a little disappointed, he said: "Oh, Nelly, as you are so fond of babies and children, you can name your third child, who shall be a little girl, after your friend. I intend the second one shall be a boy," said Hubert, mischievously.

It was rather amusing to see the child's uncle Horace pick the mite up, and treat it just as he would his own little kitten, which Nelly didn't altogether like, and rescued it as soon as she possibly could.

CHAPTER X.

NO one in the whole party was more pleased than good Mr. Sommerville, who proposed that the minister should christen the baby at his house, where they should have an enormous cake, and invite the neighborhood to witness the ceremony. "By the by, Agnes," said Nelly, after pleasantly accepting Mr. Sommerville's offer, "when are you and Horace to have your wedding party? I think it is about time, or else folks will forget that you are a bride and groom."

"After the christening party is gone over," said Agnes, "we shall certainly begin to make arrangements for ours, which my father wishes to be quite extensive, and intends to invite some of his and Mr. Egmont's, and even his brother Hubert's, friends from Boston, and even from as far away as New York is. He says he can engage rooms in the hotel at Buxton and erect tents on the grounds, and call into requisition the houses of Rob and Nelly to accommodate the numerous concourse of people. Father's heart is so large, he would take in the whole world, if he could. He says that

Providence has been so bountiful to us, that we should share His bounty with others; and, as he expects to have a good many of the more humble classes to spend the day at least, I join with him in this pleasant and really benevolent undertaking. To even try to make other people happy, is a happiness in itself."

Hubert and Rob were delighted when they heard of the good old man's intention, and promised to do all in their power to second his wishes. Rob had a good many friends among the young fishermen, and Stephen Green, his old friend, and Nelly's admirer, would, he knew, give his services in so good a cause. As Rob's baby had never been baptized, the sister and brother thought it would be pleasant to have them baptized at the same time.

The eventful day having arrived, the people began to assemble before dark, in order to enjoy the beautiful grounds by daylight. The trees were hung with lanterns, and every pains were taken to make the occasion a success. In a *marquée* on the lawn tea, coffee, chocolate and sandwiches were dispensed, and Horace, having assumed his robes, was already standing in the large saloon when Nelly and Gertrude arrived in one carriage, with their

babies on their laps, being followed by Rob's carriage, with the two fathers and the two nurses. The children were looking very sweet in their fresh lace caps, embroidered white cloaks and lovely frocks; and Rob, taking one, and Hubert the other, carried them into the hall, where they exchanged infants, to act as godfathers on the occasion. Agnes was the godmother of Nelly's child, and two friends of Gertrude's, who were present to witness the ceremony, volunteered, either of them, their services as godmother for Gertrude's baby. Horace performed the interesting ceremony with dignity and feeling. The children's parents also showed much emotion at this solemn rite, which exacts such serious promises.

Mrs. Horace had furnished a very large cake, in which were placed two valuable rings, and the young people were invited to try their luck; and, consequently, this large, elegant cake was much more crumbled and wasted than it was eaten. Gertrude got a slice in which was one ring, and her friend, who served as godmother to her child, was lucky enough to get the other. Gertrude felt disposed to give hers away, but Agnes advised her to keep it for her little girl until she was large enough to wear it, as it would be more valuable to her than

to anyone else, as it had been in her christening cake.

So now Agnes was relieved, and at liberty to think of the larger and more important entertainment, which she hoped to make a great success, to gratify her father's wishes.

A few days after the christening party, Nelly's statue arrived. It was a splendid work of art, the marble without a flaw, and of the purest color. The niche in the parlor was all ready for it, having been draped with seagreen velvet, and a curtain of the same provided to protect it from the dust. The likeness was most happily caught by the artist, the pose very graceful, her head raised a little, to show the contour of her beautiful chin and throat, one hand hanging beside her, and the other raised, as though invoking the aid of a supreme power. The expression of the whole figure was serious, though not sad, indicating the state of mind in which she was when the sculptor took the measurement. It was just after her marriage, and, though she was extremely happy, she had realized that she was making another venture into a sea where, with the best of husbands to protect her, she knew trouble could still come in the death of loved ones. So

great was her affection for Hubert, that solicitude was mixed with happiness.

The artist had caught the expression which really belonged to her at this time, showing his great power of feeling the internal state of his model. Agnes proposed that Nelly should not allow the statue to be seen, outside of the family, until the day of Mr. Sommerville's fête. Then he would have it transported and placed in a conspicuous position, so that everyone who attended the fête should have the privilege of beholding this perfect gem of art. Two very fine bands—one from Boston, of brass, and one from Portland, of stringed instruments—were engaged for the occasion. There were dancing floors erected on the lawn; also tents and *marquées*.

Before leaving France, Mr. and Mrs. Egmont had had a parting interview with Mr. Stone, the artist. Hubert expressed his thanks for, and appreciation of, his work, and the artist had rejoined: "I accept your congratulations with pleasure, but allow me to congratulate you on the possession of the original, whom I consider not only one of the most beautiful of women, but also one of the most perfect in every other respect."

Hubert had offered the artist a check for a thousand pounds, which he had positively declined. He said : " You may remember, Mr. Egmont, that I have one statue in my possession, with which I never intend to part during my life, and which I shall leave to some art institute at my death, as being adapted to furnish a beautiful model for those wishing to follow the same line of art. The third, your wife most generously permitted me to part with, for a compensation which will defray the expense of all the material used, and the rest I cordially give as a token of high esteem and regard for you, sir, and your wife." With a graceful bow, the artist took his departure after this conciliating speech.

All the distinguished people whom Mr. Somerville had invited from the different cities fortunately reached their destinations in good time. The young people, to judge by appearances, enjoyed the numerous opportunities for recreation. The bands discoursing lively music, and many tripping on the light, fantastic toe.

The rosy hues of early dawn commenced stealing over the tops of the hills before the carriages, which had been waiting for hours, were filled up, and all

the revellers, after declaring they had had the best time, most of them said, that they had ever had in their lives before, entered the coaches and departed.

And so ends this story, leaving all the characters, we hope, in a fair way not only of happiness to themselves, but the ability to confer it on others.

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